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JASON HANNA/KANSAS CITY ROYALS

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Office of the Commissioner
MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

ROBERT D. MANFRED, JR.
Commissioner of Baseball

Dear Fans:

On behalf of Major League Baseball, I am honored to welcome you to the 2020 World Series. At the conclusion of a season like no other, I send our deepest appreciation to the players, staff, medical experts and all those who have contributed to our safe resumption of play. Thankfully, the collective efforts of so many are now culminating in our 116th Fall Classic at spectacular new Globe Life Field in Arlington, Texas.

The first neutral-site World Series in modern history promises to be special because of the unprecedented circumstances that all of us have faced this year. Just as it has during other difficult chapters for our country, Baseball has demonstrated its resilience and helped lift our spirits. The men and women throughout our sport have prioritized health, safety and adaptability to deliver the greatest game in the world to our loyal fans. I am proud of the dedication and teamwork that have helped us reach this point.

Each year, the World Series showcases the competitive best of our National Pastime. I hope that our millions of youth baseball and softball players will enjoy watching the game's elite athletes compete for a place in history. We look forward to celebrating one of the best traditions in all of sports and witnessing our game at its very best — by providing moments that fans across the globe can enjoy together.

I thank you for being a part of the 2020 World Series.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Manfred Jr.

Robert D. Manfred, Jr.
Commissioner of Baseball

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ROBERT D. MANFRED, JR.
Commissioner of Baseball

Manfred was elected as the 10th Commissioner in the history of Major League Baseball on Aug. 14, 2014, by a vote of the 30 Clubs. He officially became the sport's leader on Jan. 25, 2015.

As Commissioner, Manfred set goals for the industry that focused on increased youth participation, international growth, improved pace of game, the infusion of technology, increased marketing of the game's young stars, and enhanced diversity on and off the field. In 2016, a new five-year collective bargaining agreement continued the game's unprecedented era of labor peace through 2021.

Under Manfred's leadership in 2015, MLB launched its signature PLAY BALL youth engagement program, which has resulted in meaningful increases in baseball and softball participation, per the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA). Over the last four years, baseball has added 2.7 million new participants, a 52.8% increase in casual participation. Overall, baseball saw the highest growth of any of the major sports (21%). With more than 25.6 million participants, baseball and softball combined is the most participated team sport in the United States.

Manfred became MLB's Chief Operating Officer in 2013. Prior to that, he had served as Executive Vice President since 1998, directing all collective bargaining efforts. He negotiated successful renewals of the Basic Agreement in 2002, 2006 and 2011, which dramatically improved competitive balance. Manfred is a graduate of Cornell University and Harvard Law School. He and his wife, Colleen, have four adult children.

DAN HALEM
Deputy Commissioner, Baseball Administration & Chief Legal Officer

PAT COURTNEY
Chief Communications Officer

MICHELE MEYER-SHIPP
Chief People & Culture Officer

TONY REAGINS
Chief Baseball Development Officer

BOB STARKEY
Chief Financial Officer & Senior Advisor

CHRIS MARINAK
Chief Operations & Strategy Officer

NOAH GARDEN
Chief Revenue Officer

LARA PITARO WISCH
Executive Vice President & General Counsel

MLB PHOTOS

TOP OF THE ORDER

SEAN M. HAFFEY/GETTY IMAGES

the force of el niño

If you're looking for a reason the Padres returned to the postseason for the first time in 14 years, look no further than the huge campaign from shortstop Fernando Tatis Jr. The 21-year-old sophomore turned heads in his rookie season in 2019, and absolutely exploded out of the gate in 2020, he helped give his club a swagger, and posted a whopping .400 average with runners in scoring position. When the Padres' lineup earned itself the nickname of "Slam Diego," Tatis Jr. was, of course, involved — launching a grand slam on a 3-0 count, one of a record four slams the club belted across four straight games, the first time that has happened.

tatis jr. at a glance

(NL RANK)

17 (2nd)
HR

45 (4th)
RBI

.937 (12th)
OPS

128 (5th)
TOTAL BASES

11 (4th)
SB

32 (1st)
BARRELS

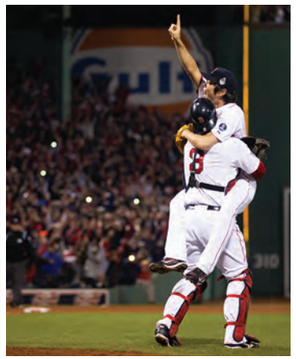
12.5 (1st)
BRLS/PA%

95.9 (1st)
AVG EXIT VELO

102 (1st)
HARD HIT
(95.5 MPH+)

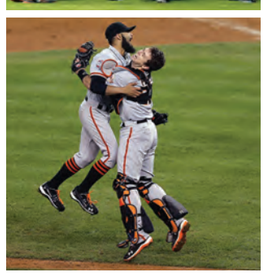
the decade in the world series

The 2019 Washington Nationals became the seventh Wild Card team overall and third of the decade to win the World Series. Bolstered by dominant starting pitching, the Nats capped a wild 10-year stretch in the Fall Classic that also featured the David Freese triple, the Giants' even-year magic, and the breaking of the Cubs' 108-year drought.



winning the decade

The Giants certainly won the past decade, as they were the only team to capture three World Series titles, in 2010, '12 and '14. The Red Sox were the only AL club to win the Fall Classic twice between 2010-19.



ranking the past 10 ws champs

1. 2018 RED SOX
2. 2016 CUBS
3. 2017 ASTROS
4. 2013 RED SOX
5. 2012 GIANTS
6. 2011 CARDINALS
7. 2019 NATIONALS
8. 2015 ROYALS
9. 2010 GIANTS
10. 2014 GIANTS

COOPER NEILL/MLB PHOTOS (SCHERZER); DILIP VISHWANAT/GETTY IMAGES (FREESE); BRAD MANGIN/MLB PHOTOS (CUBS); BY ROB TRINGALI/MLB PHOTOS (RED SOX 2018, ASTROS); RON VESELY/MLB PHOTOS (GIANTS 2014, HOSMER); RONALD MARTINEZ/GETTY IMAGES (GIANTS 2010); CHRISTIAN PETERSEN/GETTY IMAGES (GIANTS 2012)

getting it done

The entire season leads up to October, when we've seen countless players grow into legendary status and harness all that energy. But overall, it's all about the team. Certain franchises have had numerous instances of playoff success, while others are still looking to solidify that history.

With the Nationals winning the 2019 World Series, that left just six teams that have never won a title: the Rays, Brewers, Padres, Rockies, Mariners and Rangers.

But what about racking up series wins? The Yankees have played postseason baseball more than any other club, but there is a team that's had more success, if we look at winning percentage in playoff series.

Here's a look at the top 5 club postseason series winning percentages, with the Wild Card Game counting as a series, as it is its own round, entering 2020.

By Sarah Langs

1 MARLINS
1.000 (6-0)

2 YANKEES
.654 (53-28)

3 CARDINALS
.625 (30-18)

4 METS
.611 (11-7)

5 RED SOX
.595 (22-15)

MICHAEL ZAGARIS/MLB PHOTOS

the fall frenzy

Playing a shortened 60-game season amidst a global pandemic presented challenges no one had ever experienced. But there were big bright spots, too, aside from the obvious one that a baseball season, in fact, took place. New interesting rules, so many fun rookies, and, oh yeah, an expanded *16*-team postseason format. On Sept. 30, fans got more bracket-filling playoff baseball than any day in history — all 16 teams in eight games in one day.

ADAM HAGY/MLB PHOTOS (ACUNA); NUCCIO DINUZZO/MLB PHOTOS (KINTZLER); MIKE CARLSON/MLB PHOTOS (KIERMAIER); JOE SARGENT/MLB PHOTOS

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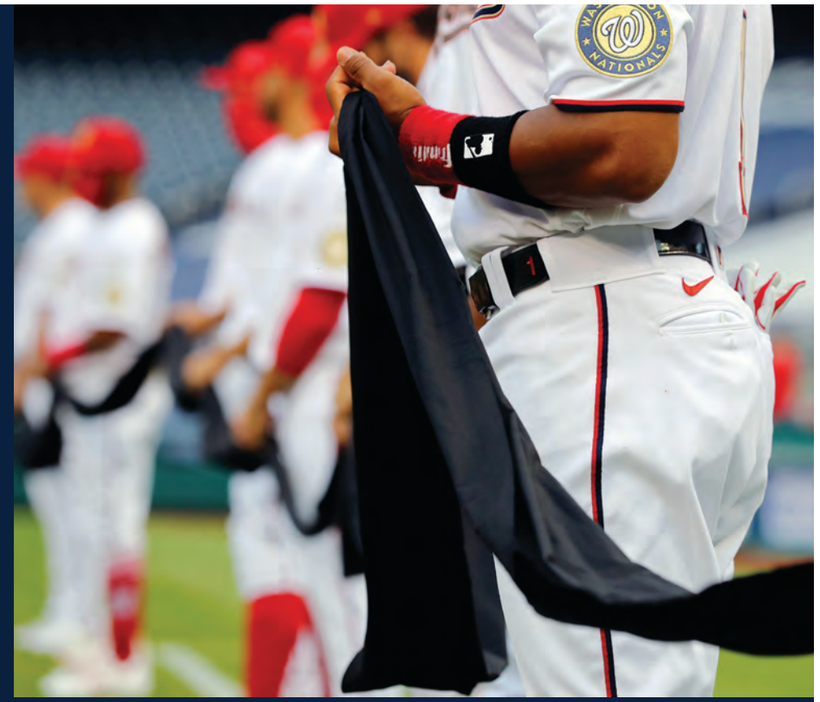
Major League Baseball, its clubs and players are committed to strengthening the communities where we live, work and play. These are some highlights from the 2020 efforts.



SOCIAL JUSTICE

Major League Baseball stands in solidarity with those in the fight for racial and social justice. In 2020, MLB has enhanced existing partnerships with the Jackie Robinson Foundation and the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, made new charitable investments in the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, and launched the new MLB Diverse Business Partners Recovery Project. Additionally MLB utilized its social media platforms and MLB Network to amplify the voices of Black MLB active and retired players and allies. MLB also established a pro bono volunteer program to drive social impact and business value for social justice organizations and minority-owned businesses and launched a comprehensive social justice resources webpage (www.mlb.com/social-justice) to promote education and conversation around relevant issues.

As part of the MLB Draft, the 30 heads of Club Baseball Operations came together to raise funds for efforts to promote equality and social justice. Individual donations from the Club representatives, combined with matches from Major League Baseball and Club owners, totaled more than $1.1 million to Campaign Zero, Color of Change, Equal Justice Initiative, Jackie Robinson Foundation and the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

THE PLAYERS ALLIANCE

In a partnership with The Players Alliance, a nonprofit organization comprised of active and former Major League Players, MLB and the MLBPA committed $10 million to help fund innovative programs to improve representation of Black Americans in baseball. These efforts are intended to improve access to the sport, both externally in the Black community, inclusive of youth participation, and in front-office career opportunities. The Players Alliance is a group of more than 100 active and former professional players united to use their platform to create new opportunities for the Black community in all areas of baseball and society.

MLB will continue to work with partners to bring about change both within our sport and society, focused on initiatives to improve diverse representation, support minority businesses and leading social justice organizations, and continue to foster important conversations and amplify the voices of our players and others committed to forward progress.

ALEX TRAUTWIG/MLB PHOTOS

TOP OF THE ORDER

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

For more than 20 years, Major League Baseball and Boys & Girls Clubs of America have worked together to create unique opportunities for millions of youth across all 50 states, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and on U.S. military bases around the world. Doing whatever it takes to close the opportunity gap and build great futures for America's youth.

Since 2016 over $1 million in grants have been distributed to Boys & Girls Clubs across the country to get kids playing ball through the PLAY BALL initiative and Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities (RBI). As the official charity of MLB, Boys & Girls Clubs annually receives significant financial and in-kind contributions, including public service announcements, advertising, player appearances, game day events and MLB game tickets.

SUMMER SLUGGER

In March 2020, Major League Baseball and EVERFI, the social impact education leader and Official Education Partner of MLB, announced the widespread availability of the "Summer Slugger" digital education platform to assist some of the 39 million students learning at home in the United States and Canada due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The digital resource, intended for children ages 8-11, engages students in baseball-themed math and literacy activities aimed to support retention of knowledge during the summer. At a time when students and parents faced unique challenges with remote learning, nearly 32,000 youth participated in the 2020 program and completed 112,000 games. Visit summerslugger.com to learn more.

VOTER EDUCATION

Major League Baseball joined the Civic Alliance, a non-partisan group of businesses working together to build a future where everyone participates in shaping our country. This election cycle, MLB, Clubs and Players focused efforts on voter education, registration and turnout, and civic engagement. Many Clubs confirmed availability of their venues in support of various voting activities, including as polling locations, voting centers, or ballot drop-off locations.

MLB launched a voter education hub at **mlb.com/vote** and invites all Baseball fans to learn more on how to take an active role in local communities.

PLAY BALL, FROM A DISTANCE

MLB remained committed to developing the skills of youth baseball and softball players through the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of these efforts included fun-focused content on social media platforms geared toward both the younger and the more experienced player, as well as virtual workouts and panel discussions held for members of the MLB Youth Academies featuring MLB Ambassadors.

ALEX TRAUTWIG/MLB PHOTOS

COVID RESPONSE

MLB has been engaged in a variety of efforts to assist its communities and blunt the wide-ranging impact of the national emergency resulting from the global coronavirus pandemic. MLB launched a COVID-19 resources website to educate fans on the virus and how to protect themselves and others, and promoted causes to support childhood hunger and provide PPE for healthcare workers. With the delay to the start of the season, Clubs utilized venues as testing sites, large scale meal distribution sites and supported blood drives to assist neighbors in need. All told, the financial response toward various communities from the entire baseball industry, which includes donations from Clubs, Players, Club Auctions, proceeds from the sale of team-branded Face Coverings and In-Kind Contributions, amounts to more than $75 million.

In addition, Major League Baseball joined more than a dozen leagues and brands to participate in Sports United (#TheRealHeroes) — a first-of-its-kind initiative from the world of sports to recognize and celebrate those on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic. MLB All-Stars Aaron Judge and Christian Yelich were featured in a PSA campaign, alongside 30-plus professional athletes, in which they wrote the name of a healthcare hero on the back of their jersey to honor those on the front lines.

TOP OF THE ORDER

A CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

The Negro Leagues received the kind of recognition they deserve this year. In mid-August, all Major League clubs celebrated the centennial of the founding of the Negro National League — the first structured Negro League that lasted for an extended period — with all players, managers, coaches and umpires wearing a Negro Leagues 100th anniversary logo patch on their uniform. The logo, a derivative of the official logo created by the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, also was featured on bases and lineup cards.

The festivities, originally slated for late June but postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighted what became a summer-long celebration of the league and its players, 100 years after the league's founding. Bob Kendrick, president of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, said the big celebration would not have happened without the support of Major League Baseball and the MLB Players Association.

THE STREAK

On Sept. 6, MLB honored the 25th anniversary of Cal Ripken Jr.'s record-breaking 2,131st consecutive game, forever cementing the Orioles superstar as The Iron Man. The Hall of Famer recorded a ceremonial first pitch to his son, Ryan, an infielder in the Orioles' Minor League system, to be part of pregame festivities at Oriole Park before Baltimore's game against the Yankees. MLB.com and MLB Network both created special content and features to celebrate the historic feat and The Streak of all streaks.

JACKIE ROBINSON DAY

On April 15, 1947, Jackie Robinson broke Baseball's color barrier when he made his historic MLB debut. Every year on April 15 — this year on Aug. 28 due to the delayed season — Baseball honors Jackie's legacy by celebrating his life, values and accomplishments. The extensive League-wide support has included retiring Jackie's number throughout the Majors in 1997. Additionally, every player has worn his No. 42 on Jackie Robinson Day since 2009.

KATHRYN RILEY/GETTY IMAGES (T-SHIRT); DOUG PENSINGER/GETTY IMAGES (RIPKEN); TOM PENNINGTON/GETTY IMAGES

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TOP OF THE ORDER

A NEUTRAL HOST
In its first neutral-site Fall Classic in modern history, the entire 2020 World Series is set to take place at Globe Life Field in Arlington, Tex., the brand-new home of the Texas Rangers.

Additionally, the revised postseason schedule called for playoff games in San Diego's Petco Park, Los Angeles' Dodger Stadium and Houston's Minute Maid Park.

ON THE AIR

FOX
Coverage of the 116th World Series, the 21st straight broadcast by FOX and the network's 23rd overall, begins on Tuesday, Oct. 20, at Globe Life Field in Arlington, Texas. All postseason MLB games televised by FOX and FS1 are also televised in Spanish exclusively on FOX Deportes, the leader in Spanish language sports media, and via the FOX Sports app.

ESPN RADIO
ESPN Radio's 22nd straight season covering the MLB postseason will culminate with live coverage of each game of the World Series. Dan Shulman will provide play-by-play commentary along with Chris Singleton and Jessica Mendoza. Mendoza makes history becoming the first woman to serve as a World Series game analyst on national radio.

INTERNATIONAL
The International feed of the World Series will be produced by MLB Network. Calling the game in English will be Matt Vasgersian, along with former MLB player and Emmy Award winner Buck Martinez. Vasgersian has been leading MLB's international broadcast coverage since the 2013 World Baseball Classic, and is joined by Martinez, who brings with him over 50 years of baseball experience, including 20 as a player, 30 in broadcasting and two as a manager. Announcers from ESPN International, NHK (Japan), MBC Sports+ (South Korea), RDS (Canada), Televisa (Mexico) and FOX Sports Latin America will cover the game live in their respective countries. The World Series will be broadcast by 75 media partners in 15 languages in 220 countries and territories around the globe.

MLB NETWORK
MLB Network will air extensive live coverage of the 2020 World Series, with previews, analysis, highlights and interviews during its Emmy Award–winning show "MLB Tonight," as well as on "High Heat with Christopher Russo," "MLB Now" and "Intentional Talk." MLB Network's Greg Amsinger, Sean Casey, Fran Charles, Peter Gammons, Brian Kenny, Al Leiter, Hall of Famer Pedro Martinez, Kevin Millar, Dan Plesac, Harold Reynolds, Buck Showalter, Chris Rose, Joel Sherman and Heidi Watney will be part of MLB Network's Fall Classic coverage. To find MLB Network in your area, visit MLBNetwork.com.

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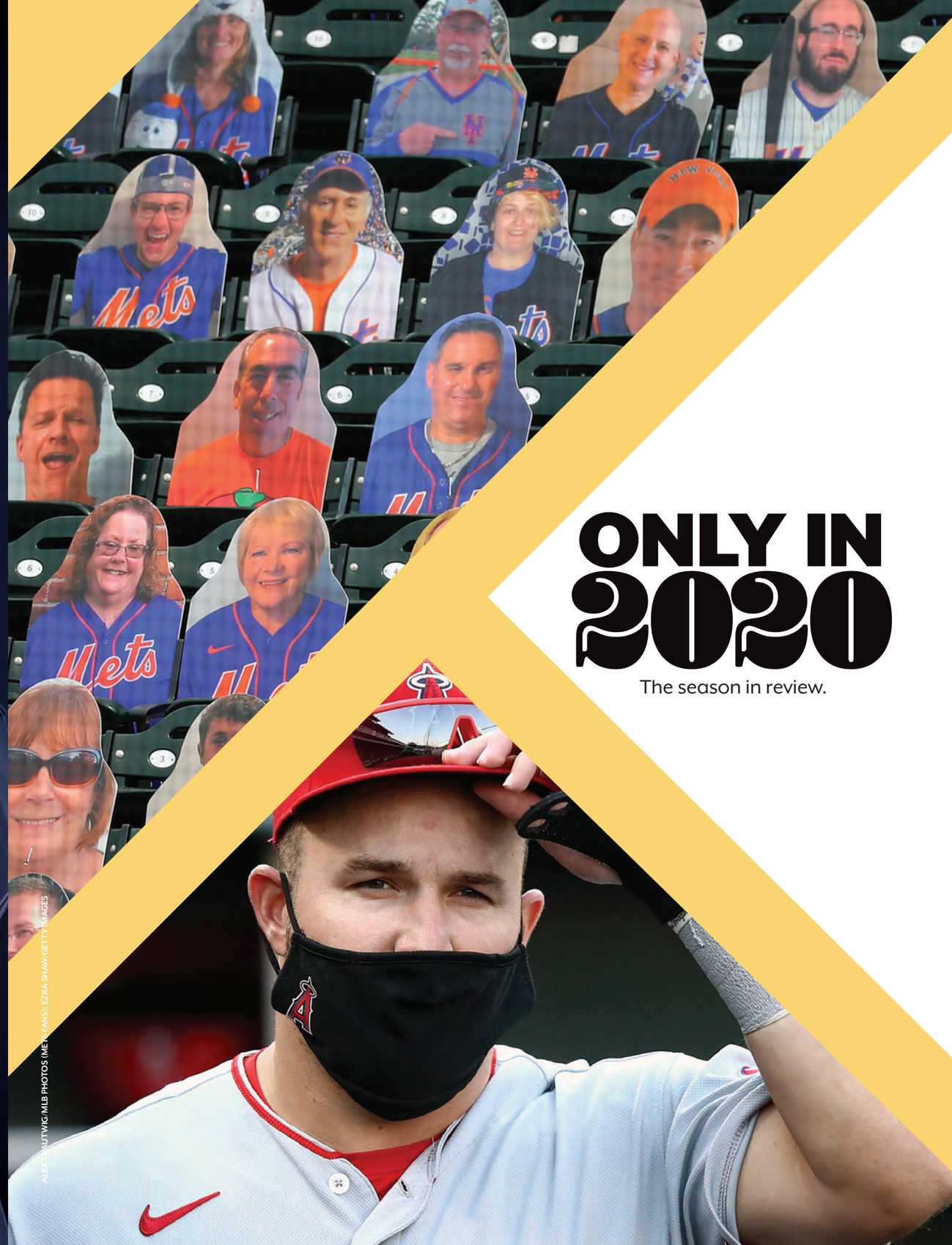

ONLY IN 2020

The season in review.

ALEX TRAUTWIG/MLB PHOTOS (METS FANS); EZRA SHAW/GETTY IMAGES

(Clockwise from top left) Freddie Freeman helped power the Braves to another NL East crown, Cleveland's Shane Bieber won the pitching Triple Crown, Jose Abreu led the White Sox to their first postseason since 2008, and Dr. Anthony Fauci threw out the ceremonial first pitch on Opening Night in Washington D.C., as the world champion Nationals hosted the Yankees on July 24.

TODD KIRKLAND/GETTY IMAGES (FREEMAN); JOE SARGENT/MLB PHOTOS (BIEBER); QUINN HARRIS/GETTY IMAGES

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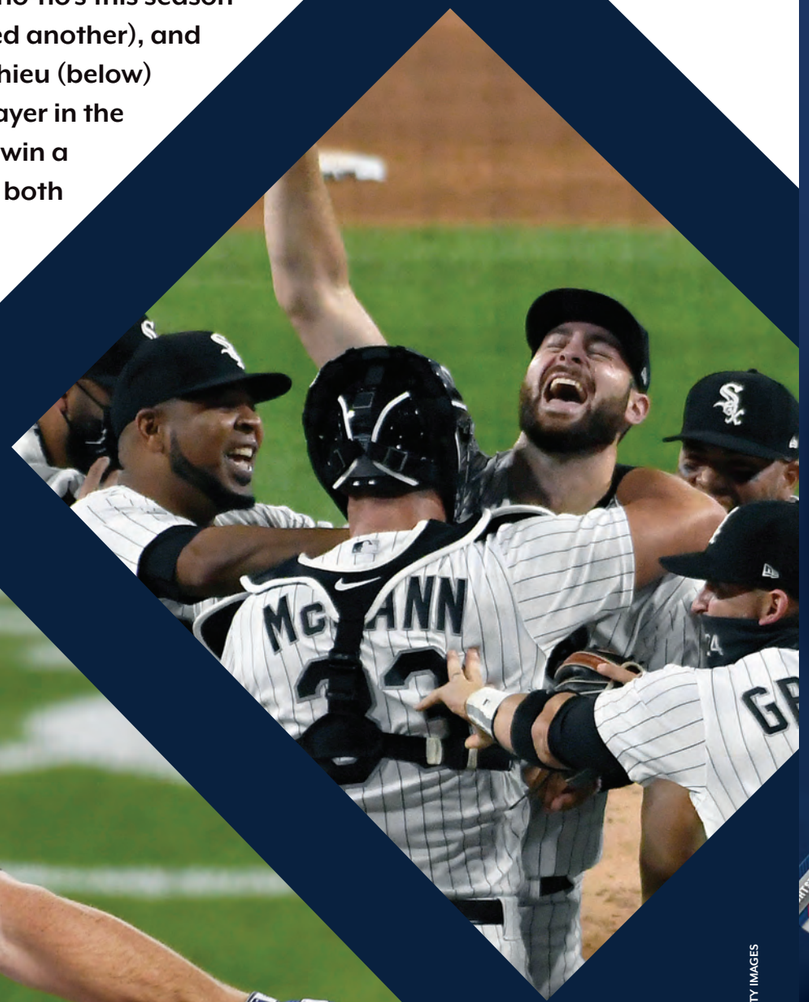
Oakland's Chris Bassitt (below) posted a 55:17 K/BB ratio this season, then won his Wild Card start. The Marlins used a whopping 61 players this year, and Sixto Sanchez was one of seven rookies to appear on their postseason roster.

ERIC RISBERG/AP (BASSITT); JOHN BAZEMORE/AP

(Clockwise from top left) Kyle and Corey Seager faced off in a big league game for the first time, Tyler Glasnow and three Rays relievers combined for a record 19 Ks in one game in July, Buffalo became the 2020 "home" of the Blue Jays, and Albert Pujols passed Willie Mays for fifth place on the all-time list with home run No. 661 in mid-September.

ABBIE PARR/GETTY IMAGES (SEAGER BROTHERS); JAYNE KAMIN-ONCEA/GETTY IMAGES (PUJOLS); BRYAN BENNETT/MLB PHOTOS (SAHLEN FIELD); MIKE EHRMANN/GETTY IMAGES

The White Sox's Lucas Giolito twirled a 13-strikeout no-hitter in August, one of two no-no's this season (the Cubs' Alec Mills added another), and the Yankees' DJ LeMahieu (below) became the first player in the modern era to win a batting title in both leagues.



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A look back at the teams to win the first Fall Classic of each decade.

By Manny Randhawa

Owning the 00s

NBHFM/MLB PHOTOS

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WORLD 2020 SERIES

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AS WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE FIRST World Series of a new decade, it's a great time to look back at the teams who won it all in the first year of each decade dating back to the first modern Fall Classic in 1903.

How did these teams do the rest of the decade after reaching the pinnacle of the baseball world to inaugurate it? Did they become the team of the decade, a one-hit wonder or something in between?

Here's a look at each team to open a decade with a championship, from the 1910 Philadelphia Athletics to the 2010 San Francisco Giants, and how that team fared over the successive nine years.

1910 Philadelphia Athletics

It was a tale of two halves for the Athletics in the 1910s. The club reached four World Series from 1910-14, winning three (1910, '11 and '13). But from 1915-19, Philadelphia endured five straight last-place finishes.

The Athletics were helmed by legendary manager Connie Mack, and led at the plate by Hall of Famers Eddie Collins and Home Run Baker. Hall of Famers Chief Bender and Eddie Plank anchored the pitching staff.

Baker hit .409 with three doubles and a triple during the 1910 Series win over the Cubs. Collins hit .429 with four doubles. Bender posted a 1.93 ERA in two starts.

The World Series wins in 1911 and '13 came against the New York Giants. The Boston Braves swept the Athletics in '14.

1920 Cleveland Indians

The Indians defeated the Brooklyn Robins in a best-of-*nine* 1920 World Series, five games to two, for the first championship in franchise history.

After splitting the first four games, Cleveland reeled off three straight victories to capture the title. The Indians were led by a pair of Hall of Famers — Tris Speaker hit .320 with a pair of doubles and a triple, and Stan Coveleski turned in a 0.67 ERA over three starts.

Coveleski yielded one run on five hits in a 3-1 Game 1 victory in Brooklyn. He did the same in Game 4 at League Park, helping Cleveland even the Series with another complete-game five-hitter in a 5-1 victory. He then turned in a five-hit shutout with the backing of an RBI triple from Speaker in a 3-0 title-clinching win in Game 7.

1930 Philadelphia Athletics

The Athletics powered their way to a second consecutive World Series title in 1930, defeating the Cardinals in six games. The lineup was headlined by Hall of Fame sluggers Jimmie Foxx and Al Simmons, and the pitching staff was anchored by Hall of Fame southpaw Lefty Grove and right-hander George Earnshaw.

The clubs split the first four games, setting up a pivotal Game 5. With the contest scoreless in the top of the ninth, Foxx launched a two-run homer to propel the Athletics to a 2-0 victory. In Game 6, Philadelphia cruised to a 7-1 victory, with Simmons going deep for the second time in the Series and Earnshaw throwing a complete game to seal the clincher.

Overall, Foxx hit .333 with two doubles, a triple and a home run. Simmons hit .364 with two doubles and two homers. Grove posted a 1.42 ERA over three appearances (two starts), and Earnshaw posted a 0.72 ERA over three starts.

The following season, the Cardinals exacted revenge, edging the Athletics in a seven-game World Series. The A's would not get back to the Fall Classic until 1972, when the franchise was in Oakland and won three straight World Series titles.

BAKER (LEFT) AND THE 1910 ATHLETICS BECAME THE FIRST TEAM TO START A DECADE WITH A WORLD SERIES WIN. TWO DECADES LATER, THE A's ROSE TO THE TOP AGAIN, AS SIMMONS & CO. BROUGHT HOME BACK-TO-BACK TITLES IN 1929 AND '30.

NBHFM/MLB PHOTOS (2)

1940 Cincinnati Reds

In 1939, the Reds reached the World Series but were swept by the Yankees. Far from a sweep, the '40 Fall Classic went the distance, and this time the Tigers were the Reds' foes.

In a back-and-forth affair, Cincinnati took Games 2, 4, 6 and the decisive Game 7 to win the franchise's first championship since 1919, when a cloud hung over the Fall Classic due to the "Black Sox" scandal.

The Reds were led by starting pitchers Bucky Walters and Paul Derringer. Facing elimination in Game 6, Cincinnati turned to Walters, who tossed a five-hit shutout in a 4-0 victory. The next day, Derringer held Detroit to one unearned run in a 2-1, complete-game victory that clinched the championship.

The Reds wouldn't reach another Fall Classic until 1975 with the "Big Red Machine."

DERRINGER

1950 New York Yankees

The 1950s would become the greatest decade in Yankees history, and considering the franchise has won 27 World Series titles, that's saying something. It all started with a sweep of the Phillies in the 1950 Fall Classic, though the series was tighter than the outcome might suggest.

Games 1, 2 and 3 were all decided by one run — Vic Raschi tossed a two-hit shutout in a 1-0 Game 1 victory, Joe DiMaggio launched a 10th-inning homer to lift New York to a 2-1 win in Game 2, and Jerry Coleman delivered a walk-off single in a 3-2 Yankees win in Game 3. Yogi Berra homered in Game 4, which was a more comfortable 5-2 victory to clinch the title.

That championship kicked off a decade in which the Yankees won six titles — in 1950, '51, '52, '53, '56 and '58.

DIMAGGIO

1960 Pittsburgh Pirates

The 1960 World Series will forever be remembered for being the first to end on a walk-off home run (The only other is the '93 Fall Classic, which ended on a homer by Blue Jays slugger Joe Carter).

Bill Mazeroski's unforgettable shot notwithstanding, the Pirates were heavy underdogs. The Yankees' lineup featured Mickey Mantle, Berra and Roger Maris. If you knew nothing about the Series, except that the Yankees outscored the Pirates, 55-27, you'd probably conclude the Yankees won yet another championship.

But the three Pirates losses were by scores of 16-3, 10-0, and 12-0, and the four Pirates victories were by a combined margin of seven runs. In Game 7, Mazeroski came to the plate in the ninth with the score tied, 9-9. He smashed a 1-0 pitch from Ralph Terry over the Forbes Field wall in left to lift Pittsburgh to its first World Series title in 35 years.

Despite the early-decade success, Pittsburgh would finish no higher than third in the NL in the next nine years.

1970 Baltimore Orioles

This World Series belonged to Brooks Robinson, who not only hit .429 with two doubles and two homers against the Reds, but put on one of the greatest defensive performances in postseason history.

Robinson's signature play came in the sixth inning of Game 1 at Riverfront Stadium. Cincinnati's Lee May hit a sharp ground ball down the third base line. Robinson made an incredible back-handed grab and, as his momentum took him into foul territory, he threw across the diamond to get May by a step.

Two other Orioles each slugged a pair of home runs: Frank Robinson and Boog Powell. On the mound, Dave McNally threw a complete game in a 9-3 win in Game 3, in which he also hit the first grand slam by a pitcher in World Series history. And in Game 5, Mike Cuellar tossed a complete game for the clincher, another 9-3 victory.

The Orioles reached the World Series again in 1971, but lost in seven games to the Pirates. Baltimore lost the AL Championship Series in both '73 and '74.

AP (2)

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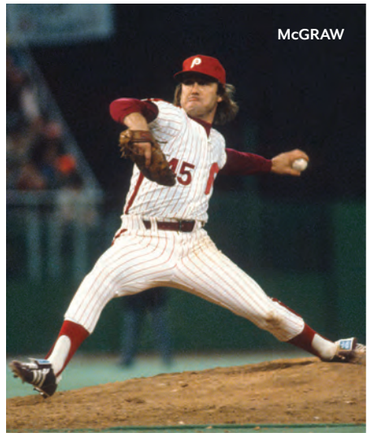
Following a four-year hiatus, the club returned to the postseason in '79, when it again lost in seven to Pittsburgh.

1980 Philadelphia Phillies

The Phillies lost in the NLCS each year from 1976-78, but in '80, with NL MVP and future Hall of Famer Mike Schmidt leading the offense, future Hall of Famer Steve Carlton headlining the starting rotation, and Tug McGraw anchoring the bullpen, the Phillies wouldn't be denied.

Schmidt was named World Series MVP after hitting .381 and launching a pair of homers to fuel Philadelphia's six-game victory over the Royals for the franchise's first championship. Carlton and McGraw combined to yield one run on seven hits in the Game 6 clincher.


McGRAW

The Phillies reached the Series again in '83, but lost in five games to the Orioles. It was the last hurrah for that cohort, as Philadelphia wouldn't reach the postseason again the rest of the decade. From 1985-89, the club never finished above .500.

1990 Cincinnati Reds

The 1990 Reds were an exciting group. With future Hall of Famer Barry Larkin at shortstop, all-world talent Eric Davis in the outfield, Jose Rijo anchoring the starting rotation, and a trio of relievers dubbed "The Nasty Boys" — Rob Dibble, Randy Myers and Norm Charlton — in the bullpen, Cincinnati was loaded with talent.

The Reds never spent a day out of first place in the NL West. In the postseason, they dispatched the Pirates in a six-game NLCS before taking on the heavily-favored Athletics in the World Series.

Cincinnati shocked the baseball world by sweeping Oakland for its first World Series championship in 14 years. Chris Sabo hit .563 with two homers, and Rijo was named World Series MVP after posting a 0.59 ERA over two starts, including the clincher.

The Reds reached the postseason again in 1995, when they were swept in the NLCS by the Braves.

THE 2000 YANKEES

2000 New York Yankees

The Yankees' most recent dynasty had been cemented by this point, with New York having won the World Series in 1996, '98 and '99. But it was three-peat time in 2000, and for the first time in 44 years, two New York teams faced off in the World Series, with the Yankees meeting the Mets.

The Yanks defeated their cross-town counterparts in five games, winning the franchise's 26th championship. Derek Jeter was named Series MVP after hitting .409 with two doubles, a triple and two homers to earn a fourth World Series ring in his six-year career to that point.

It would be nine years before the Yankees would again be on top of the baseball world. In 2009, the "Core Four" Yankees got one last hurrah. Jeter, Mariano Rivera, Andy Pettitte and Jorge Posada led New York to its 27th World Series title in a six-game victory over the Phillies.

2010 San Francisco Giants

San Francisco won its first World Series title since moving from New York in 1958, on the back of phenomenal pitching and timely hitting.

Two-time Cy Young Award winner Tim Lincecum led the starting rotation, with the reliable Matt Cain and a heralded rookie named Madison Bumgarner behind him. The bullpen was strong, with Brian Wilson serving as closer. And the offense got a midseason boost when catcher Buster Posey was called up from the Minors.

The Giants defeated the heavily-favored Phillies in the NLCS and met the high-powered Rangers in the World Series. San Francisco's pitching staff posted a 2.45 ERA against Texas, and Lincecum tossed eight dominant innings in Game 5 to put the Giants on the doorstep of their first championship since Willie Mays made "The Catch" in 1954.

World Series MVP Edgar Renteria, who delivered a walk-off single to win the World Series with the Marlins 13 years earlier, launched a three-run homer in the seventh to lift the Giants to a 3-1 victory.

That was just the beginning for San Francisco — the franchise won it all again in '12 and '14, bucking the odds in each of those years as well. ◆

Manny Randhawa is a reporter for MLB.com. Follow him on Twitter at @MannyOnMLB.

FOCUS ON SPORT (MCGRAW); RICH PILLING/MLB PHOTOS

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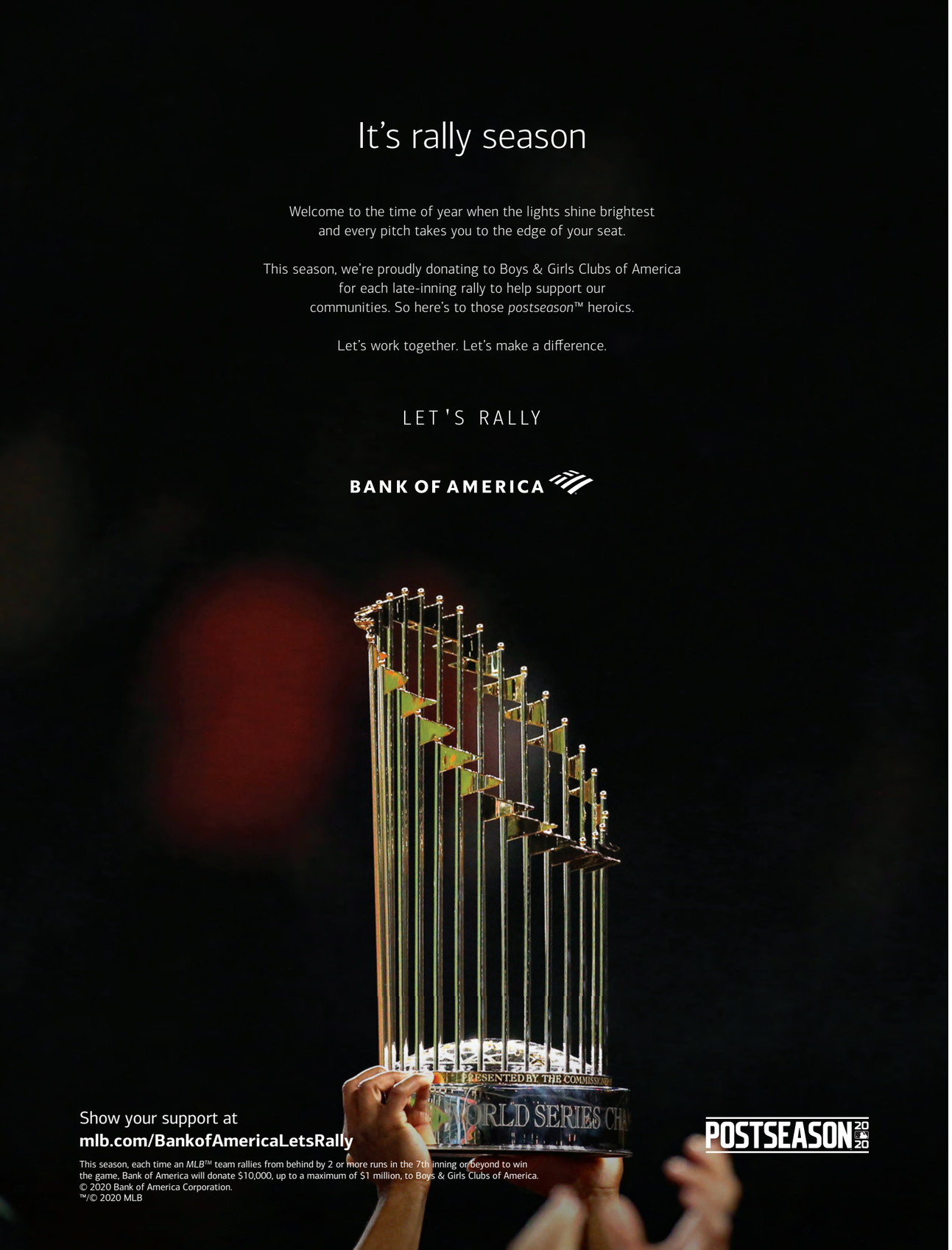

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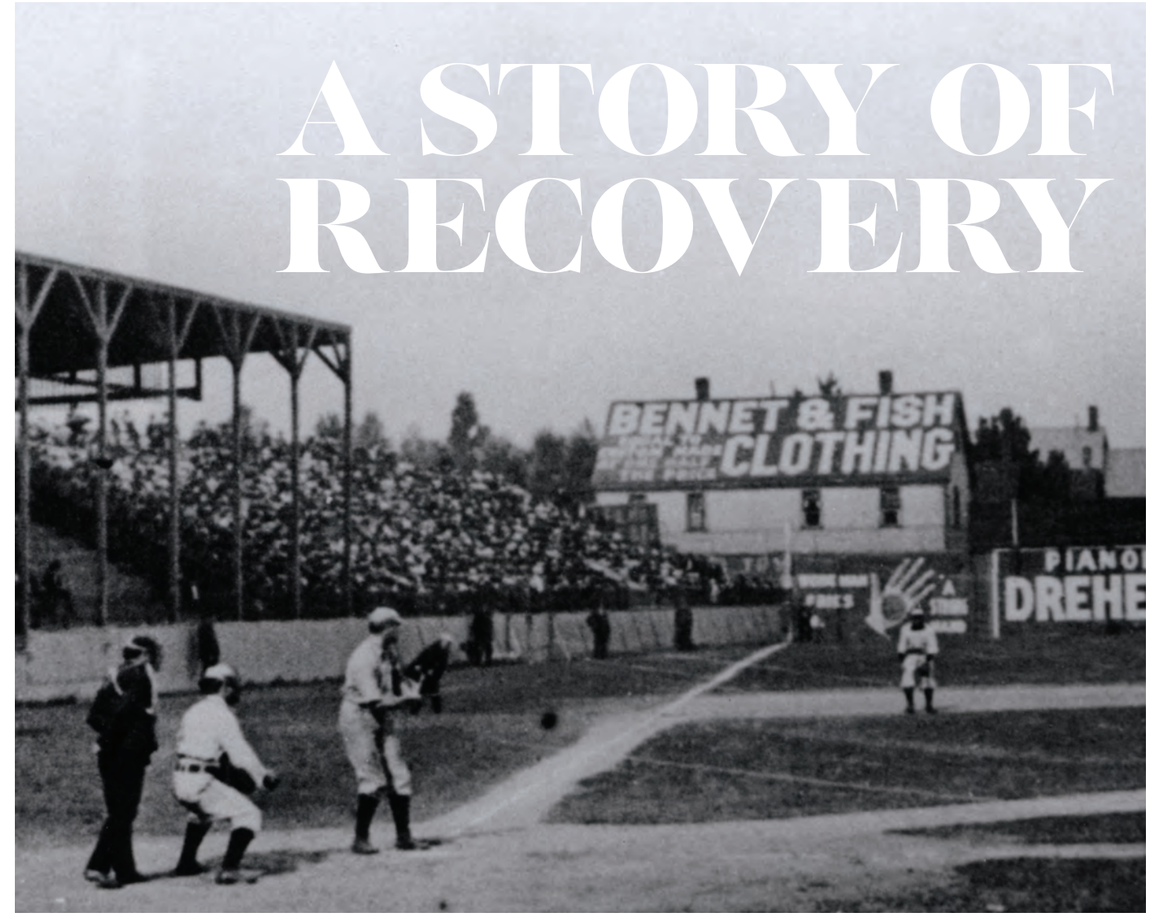
POSTSEASON 2020

A STORY OF RECOVERY



NBHFM/MLB PHOTOS

The 1920 World Series took place amid on-field scandal, skyrocketing unemployment and a raging health pandemic.
By Anthony Castrovince

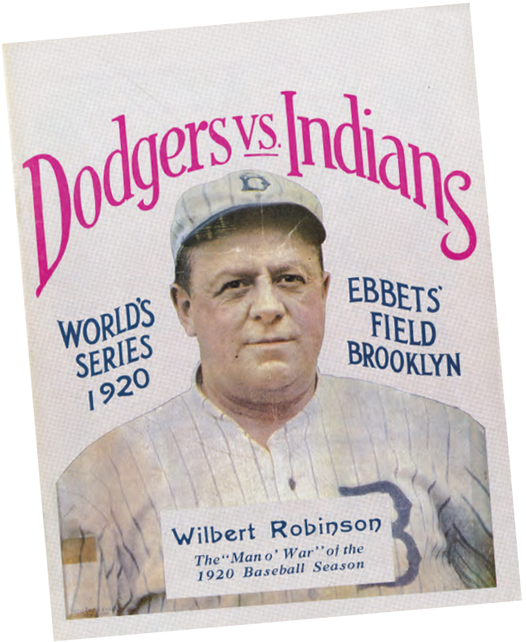
THE GHOSTS OF BASEBALL PAST HAVE BEEN PAVED OVER. LEAGUE PARK IS now a community park, covered in artificial turf. The Ebbets Field grounds hold an apartment complex. The sites that housed the 1920 World Series illustrate the intangibility of a century-old event.

And yet, while we can't physically touch 1920, we can, weirdly, relate to it. Then, as now, Major League Baseball was wrapping up a year that had been steeped in scandal. Then, as now, the United States had been ravaged by a global health crisis.

The uniforms and style of play were different, and the Series itself was a best-of-nine. But because triumph over adversity remains a celebrated motif in sports and in life itself — and because of the strange parallels connecting 1920 and 2020 — a long-ago Fall Classic offers a story worth retelling.

A SEISMIC SHIFT WAS TAKING PLACE IN THE WORLD AND IN BASEBALL IN 1920. Babe Ruth's arrival to New York in the most significant swap in MLB history instantly elevated the ceiling of the Yankees and was part of a larger change in the league at large. Ruth's prodigious power and a livelier baseball contributed to a significant rise in runs per game league-wide.

Furthermore, the 1920 season saw the whispers about the Chicago White Sox fixing the previous year's World Series grow into shouts. Evidence surfaced that gamblers had rigged an Aug. 31, 1920, game between the Cubs and Phillies, and subsequent grand jury investigation quickly turned to the topic of the 1919 Series, in which outfielder "Shoeless" Joe Jackson and the Sox had lost to the Cincinnati Reds in suspicious fashion.



The first World Series of the 1920s would be won by a team full of men trying to mend their broken hearts.

Soon, the public accounts and admissions mounted, and the Black Sox Scandal, as it is now known, enveloped the game and threatened its future.

As baseball's public perception problem was rising, the threat posed by the so-called "Spanish Flu" was at long last diminished. The strain of H1N1 virus had spread uncontrolled through 1918 and 1919 — killing, by some estimates, more than 50 million people worldwide and about 675,000 in the U.S. and overwhelming health systems.

The pandemic had its last gasp with a relatively minor fourth wave in isolated areas — including New York City — in the spring of 1920. And by this point, the American economy was reeling from the effects of the pandemic, with high unemployment rates and deflation and low industrial production. But while a rally in business production would not arrive until the second half of 1921, the collective immunity to the influenza strain and the calming of fears for those who had survived both the pandemic and the Great War, a societal euphoria began to emerge in 1920.

Baseball, in a way, represented the times. The Babe's first big blasts in the Bronx can, in retrospect, be seen as a signal of the start of the Roaring Twenties. And just as the world was trying to put so much death and devastation behind it, the first World Series of the 1920s would be won by a team full of men trying to mend their broken hearts.

TO GET TO THE WORLD SERIES, THE BROOKLYN ROBINS had to win 16 of their final 18 games to pull away in what had previously been a tight National League pennant race. Yet as impressive as that pennant push might have been, it's nothing compared to the September sprint of a Cleveland Indians club battling the White Sox and the Yankees while mourning the loss of a beloved teammate.

The AL standings were in a virtual three-way tie on what would become the fateful date of Aug. 16. On the mound that day at the Polo Grounds was Yankees right-hander Carl Mays, who had a deceptive submarine delivery and a reputation for a dour disposition and beanballs. His level of popularity stood in direct contrast to that of Indians shortstop Ray Chapman, affectionately known as "Chappie" and viewed as one of the Tribe's most vital cogs.

While Mays tended to throw inside, Chapman tended to crowd the plate. It was a recipe for danger. And with the first pitch of the fifth inning of that pivotal game, it was a recipe for death. Mays, allegedly anticipating a bunt from the speedy Chapman, threw the fastball that smacked Chapman's left temple.

This was 21 years before protective plate inserts in hats, 36 years before the NL's first rule requiring head protection went into effect (the AL followed suit two years later), and 51 years before plastic protective helmets became mandatory across MLB. The face-protecting flaps with which we are so familiar today weren't instituted until 1983. Umpires were not yet urged to replace the dirtied, darkened ball with a pristine new white pill at every turn. And the batter's eye that now helps hitters pick up the pitch as it is delivered from the hurler's hands did not yet exist.

So Chapman was on his own. And then, suddenly, he was on the ground. Chapman was rushed to the hospital, where surgery could not save him. He was the first and only on-field casualty in Major League history.

"Chappie had his heart and soul in the fight for the pennant," catcher Pinch Thomas told the *Plain Dealer*. "And we shall fight as we would were he here with us with this difference. We shall fight just enough harder to make up for his absence."

Amazingly, they did just that. Though the Indians fell into third place briefly after Chapman's death, they, too, saved their best for the home stretch, winning 14 of their final 18 games behind the great play and leadership of their center fielder/skipper Tris Speaker. They also got a big break on the eve of the final weekend of the season, when White Sox owner Charles Comiskey suspended the seven remaining players from the 1919 World Series fix after the grand jury indictments were handed down. Chicago had made a late run at the pennant, but the fallout from the fix shattered the short-handed Sox in their final series.

NBHFM/MLB PHOTOS

And so it was Indians vs. Robins — two teams that had never previously won it all. Somebody was going to come out with its first World Series title. And the Series itself would feature several other firsts.

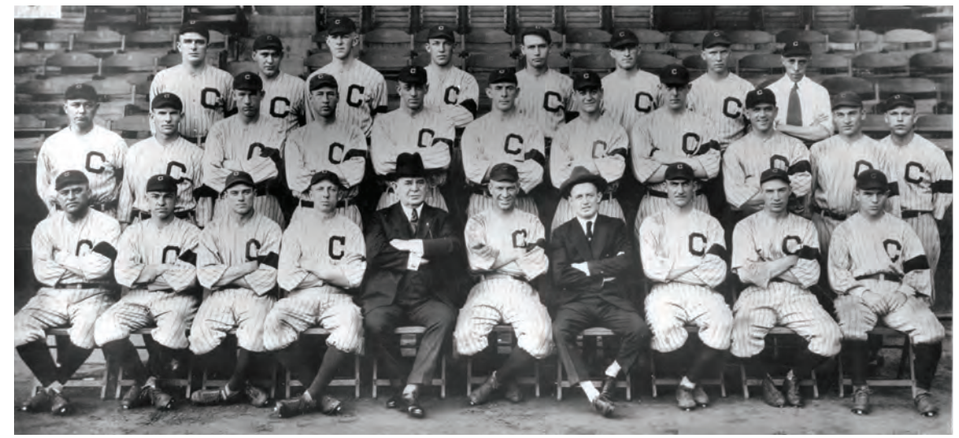
THE 1920 SERIES WAS ONE OF THREE IMMEDIATELY following the conclusion of the First World War that was extended to a best-of-nine, for no reason other than the league was trying to maximize attendance revenue. As would again be the case in 2020 — when MLB temporarily expanded its playoffs to 16 teams to offset some of the randomness of the 60-game season — the times dictated the terms.

In 1920, the hunt for revenue affected the World Series schedule in other ways. Though the Series was slated to begin at League Park, the home-field setup was switched to give Indians owners James Dunn time to add seats at his home park to cash in on the craze his club had become.

So Game 1 at Ebbets Field it was. And interestingly, the ticket stubs and programs would bear not the home club's official nickname but its longstanding informal one — the Dodgers (which became sanctioned in the '30s).

Though the Indians got their road swing started off right with a 3-1 victory behind a Stan Coveleski gem, the Robins rebounded to take Games 2 and 3 before the Series shifted to Cleveland. In Game 4, at a jam-packed League Park, where fans had lined up overnight to purchase $1.10 bleacher tickets, Coveleski delivered another masterful performance in a 5-1 victory that evened things up.

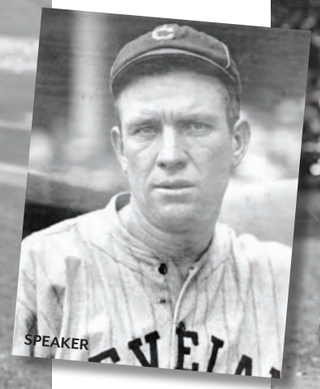
Game 5 was significant as a swing game and for its place in the record books. By the fifth inning, attendees already had witnessed the first grand slam in World Series history (off the bat of Indians right fielder Elmer Smith) and the first home run by a pitcher in Series history (from the Indians' Jim Bagby). But no Series before or since has seen what happened in the fifth. The Robins had Otto Miller at first and Pete Kilduff at second with none out when Clarence Mitchell hit a line drive toward right-center field. The runners took off. Bill Wambsganss leaped high in the air to snare what seemed a sure hit, then ran

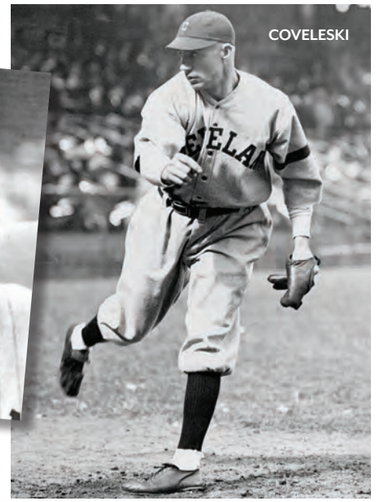


THE 1920 INDIANS (TOP), WHO WENT ON TO TAKE THE CROWN, AND THE '20 BROOKLYN ROBINS.

NBHFM/MLB PHOTOS (2)

CHAPMAN


SPEAKER


COVELESKI

DIDI GREGORIUS, MASKED UP IN 2020

to tag second. He turned to throw to first, but Miller had stopped dead in his tracks. Wambsganss tagged him out for the ultra-rare unassisted triple play. It has happened just 14 other times in MLB history (making it less common than the perfect game) and never before or since in the World Series.

The Indians won that game, 8-1. And with Duster Mails tossing a shutout in a 1-0 win in Game 6, they were on the cusp of a crown going into Game 7 at home. Coveleski started on just two days' rest, and, rather than countering with their Game 1 starter, Cleveland-native Rube Marquard, who had been caught reselling Series tickets in front of the team hotel, the Robins went with Burleigh Grimes.

Once again, Coveleski dominated the Brooklyn bats, allowing just five hits in his third straight complete game, and the Indians were victorious, 3-0.

"It has been a long time Cleveland has been waiting for its first pennant winner," Speaker said, "and I am happy that the honor was reserved for me and that my boys and I were also able to bring a world's championship here."

It has been wondered aloud whether the defending AL champion White Sox were still throwing games in 1920. And it is understood now that Ruth and the Yankees would dominate the remainder of the decade … and many decades to come.

But at a time when the league became swallowed by scandal, at a moment when a big man posting even bigger numbers was rewriting the record books, and in a year in which a teammate's death could have unraveled them, the Cleveland Indians overcame tragedy to achieve baseball immortality.

We'll see which team rises to the occasion in what has been a strange and difficult 2020. Much like the Black Sox scandal enveloped baseball discourse in 1920, the sign-stealing scandal colored all conversation going into what had seemed like the otherwise standard Spring Training of 2020. Then, that discussion — like so much else in our world — was upended when the stark, harsh realities of the coronavirus spread became apparent in early March. As the deadliest pandemic on U.S. soil since the Spanish Flu raged, baseball was put on pause, then recalibrated completely, with a reduced schedule, empty parks and more than 100 pages of health and safety protocols.

The story of the American recovery from this pandemic has not yet been written. But as usual, baseball has a place within that story. The World Series arrives in a changed world. So much of what we're witnessing feels unfamiliar, even as so much of the past is repeated. ◆

Anthony Castrovince has been a reporter for MLB.com since 2004. Read his columns and follow him on Twitter at @Castrovince.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (CHAPMAN); NBHFM/MLB PHOTOS (SPEAKER, COVELESKI); ALEX TRAUTWIG

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For 160 years, Boys & Girls Clubs have navigated times of tragedy and crisis to provide safe places for children and teens. Today, more than ever, Clubs are doing whatever it takes to support local youth, families and communities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Clubs across the nation are providing meals to those in need, expanding child care services, and offering in person or virtual learning and programming to keep youth engaged and on-track academically.

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SCORECARD SECTION

WORLD SERIES 2020

HOW TO SCORE

Different fans may have different methods of keeping score, and many use their own notations, but here's a simple method of scoring on your own:

First, fill in the starting lineup. When the game begins, start in the column corresponding to the first inning and find the box next to the name of the hitter who is at the plate. If he makes an out, write down how he was put out according to the legend below. If the hitter grounds out to shortstop, for example, write in "6-3," which shows that the shortstop threw him out at first base. The notation for a flyout to left, for example, would be "7."

If the batter gets a base hit, pencil it in according to which base he reached. The corners of the boxes represent the bases, with the lower-right corner being first. If he singles, pencil in a "–" in the lower right. If he doubles, pencil in a "=" in the upper right, and so on. If he walks, pencil in "BB" in the lower right. As the runner advances, mark the appropriate symbol in the appropriate corner.

If a runner scores, put a circle at the bottom left of the box, and inside the circle, note the symbol of the play and/or player that drove him in. For example, if the No. 5 hitter drives in two runs with a single, mark his single in the bottom right of his box and then mark a circle with the number "5" inside the boxes of the runners that scored on the hit.

At the end of each inning, total the hits and runs for that inning only. At the end of the game, add the results for each inning to get the final totals.

SAMPLE SCORESHEET

TEAM	1	2
Center Fielder	3 2 ④ –	8
Shortstop	6–4 BB	6
First Baseman	4 ⑤ FC	K
Third Baseman	= ⑤	
Right Fielder	SB 6 6–2–	
Left Fielder	SB –	
Designated Hitter	FC	
Second Baseman	4	
Catcher		=
TOTALS (R/H)	3/4	0/1

INNING 1

- singled, advanced to 2nd on next batter's walk, took 3rd on fielder's choice, scored on No. 4 batter's double
- walked, later forced out, shortstop to 2nd base
- reached on fielder's choice, advanced to 3rd on next batter's double, scored on No. 5 batter's single
- doubled, scored on No. 5 batter's single
- singled, advanced to 2nd on next batter's single, stole 3rd base, thrown out on grounder, shortstop to catcher
- singled, stole 2nd base
- reached 1st on fielder's choice
- popped out to 2nd base

INNING 2

- flied out to center field
- popped out to shortstop
- struck out swinging
- doubled

NUMBER PLAYERS AS FOLLOWS:

1 Pitcher
2 Catcher
3 First Baseman
4 Second Baseman
5 Third Baseman
6 Shortstop
7 Left Fielder
8 Center Fielder
9 Right Fielder
DH Designated Hitter

SYMBOLS FOR PLAYS

—	Single	BB	Walk	HBP	Hit By Pitch	DP	Double Play	L	Line Drive
=	Double	K	Strikeout	WP	Wild Pitch	E	Error	B	Bunt
≡	Triple	ꓘ	Called Out On Strikes	PB	Passed Ball	SF	Sacrifice Fly	U	Unassisted
≣	Home Run	F	Foul Fly	SB	Stolen Base	IBB	Intentional Walk		
SAC	Sacrifice	FC	Fielder's Choice	FO	Force Out	BK	Balk		

WORLD SERIES 2020

GAME 1

#	VISITORS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	AB	R	H	RBI	E
	TOTALS (R/H)															

PITCHERS	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO

PITCHERS	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO

UMPIRES
HP
1B
2B
3B
LF
RF
REPLAY

#	HOME	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	AB	R	H	RBI	E
	TOTALS (R/H)															

BALLPARK		TIME		ATTENDANCE	

WORLD SERIES 2020

GAME 2

#	VISITORS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	AB	R	H	RBI	E
	TOTALS R / H															

PITCHERS	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO

PITCHERS	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO

UMPIRES
HP
1B
2B
3B
LF
RF
REPLAY

#	HOME	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	AB	R	H	RBI	E
	TOTALS R / H															

BALLPARK		TIME		ATTENDANCE	

WORLD SERIES 2020

GAME 3

#	VISITORS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	AB	R	H	RBI	E
	TOTALS R / H															

PITCHERS	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO

PITCHERS	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO

UMPIRES
HP
1B
2B
3B
LF
RF
REPLAY

#	HOME	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	AB	R	H	RBI	E
	TOTALS R / H															

BALLPARK		TIME		ATTENDANCE	

WORLD SERIES 2020

GAME 4

#	VISITORS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	AB	R	H	RBI	E
	TOTALS R / H															

PITCHERS	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO

PITCHERS	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO

UMPIRES
HP
1B
2B
3B
LF
RF
REPLAY

#	HOME	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	AB	R	H	RBI	E
	TOTALS R / H															

BALLPARK		TIME		ATTENDANCE	

WORLD SERIES 2020

GAME 5

#	VISITORS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	AB	R	H	RBI	E
	TOTALS R / H															

PITCHERS	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO

PITCHERS	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO

UMPIRES
HP
1B
2B
3B
LF
RF
REPLAY

#	HOME	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	AB	R	H	RBI	E
	TOTALS R / H															

BALLPARK		TIME		ATTENDANCE	

WORLD SERIES 2020

GAME 6

#	VISITORS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	AB	R	H	RBI	E
	TOTALS R / H															

PITCHERS	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO

PITCHERS	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO

UMPIRES
HP
1B
2B
3B
LF
RF
REPLAY

#	HOME	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	AB	R	H	RBI	E
	TOTALS R / H															

BALLPARK		TIME		ATTENDANCE	

WORLD SERIES 2020

GAME 7

#	VISITORS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	AB	R	H	RBI	E
	TOTALS R / H															

PITCHERS	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO

PITCHERS	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO

UMPIRES
HP
1B
2B
3B
LF
RF
REPLAY

#	HOME	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	AB	R	H	RBI	E
	TOTALS R / H															

BALLPARK		TIME		ATTENDANCE	

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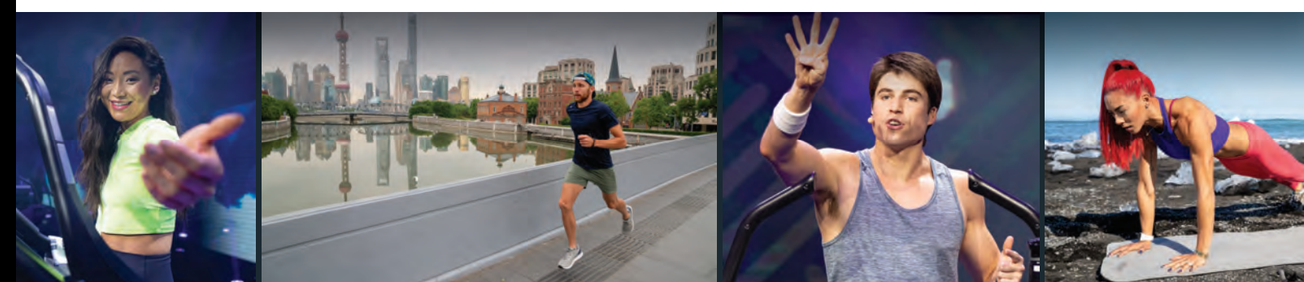
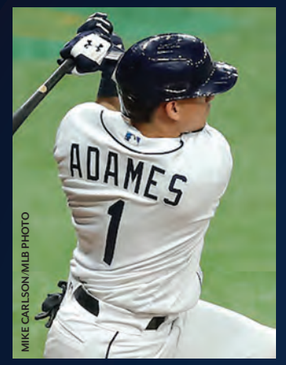


TAMPA BAY RAYS ROSTER

WORLD SERIES 2020

MICHAEL REAVES/GETTY IMAGES

Kevin Cash MANAGER


MIKE CARLSON/MLB PHOTO

Willy Adames SHORTSTOP

MIKE EHRMANN/GETTY IMAGES

José Alvarado PITCHER

JULIO AGUILAR/GETTY IMAGES

Nick Anderson PITCHER

JULIO AGUILAR/GETTY IMAGES

Randy Arozarena OUTFIELD

MIKE CARLSON/MLB PHOTO

Mike Brosseau INFIELD

GREGORY BULL/AP

Diego Castillo PITCHER

JIM MCISAAC/GETTY IMAGES

Ji-Man Choi FIRST BASE

MADDIE MEYER/GETTY IMAGES

John Curtiss PITCHER

TODD KIRKLAND/GETTY IMAGES

Yandy Díaz INFIELD

CHRIS O'MEARA/AP

Pete Fairbanks PITCHER

DOUGLAS P. DEFELICE/GETTY IMAGES

Josh Fleming PITCHER

Roster subject to change

MIKE CARLSON/GETTY IMAGES

Tyler Glasnow PITCHER

JULIO CORTEZ/AP

Kevin Kiermaier OUTFIELD

NICK WASS/AP

Aaron Loup PITCHER

MIKE EHRMANN/GETTY IMAGES

Brandon Lowe INFIELD

MIKE CARLSON/MLB PHOTO

Manuel Margot OUTFIELD

ALEX TRAUTWIG/MLB PHOTOS

Shane McClanahan PITCHER

CHRIS O'MEARA/AP

Austin Meadows OUTFIELD

TODD KIRKLAND/GETTY IMAGES

Charlie Morton PITCHER

MIKE EHRMANN/GETTY IMAGES

Michael Perez CATCHER

CHRIS O'MEARA/AP

Hunter Renfroe OUTFIELD

JEFFREY T. BARNES/AP

Aaron Slegers PITCHER

CHRIS O'MEARA/AP

Blake Snell PITCHER

Roster subject to change

TAMPA BAY RAYS ROSTER

WORLD SERIES 2020

JEFFREY T. BARNES/AP

Ryan Thompson PITCHER

CHRIS O'MEARA/AP

Yoshi Tsutsugo OUTFIELD

CHRIS O'MEARA/AP

Joey Wendle INFIELD

TODD KIRKLAND/GETTY IMAGES

Ryan Yarbrough PITCHER

JULIO CORTEZ/AP

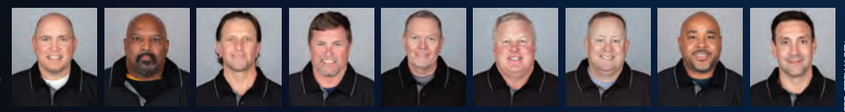
Mike Zunino CATCHER

TAMPA BAY RAYS COACHES

MARY DEGICCO/MLB PHOTOS (7)

Stan Boroski, BULLPEN COACH
Paul Hoover, MAJOR LEAGUE FIELD COORDINATOR
Rodney Linares, THIRD BASE COACH
Chad Mottola, HITTING COACH
Matt Quatraro, BENCH COACH
Kyle Snyder, PITCHING COACH
Ozzie Timmons, FIRST BASE COACH

WORLD SERIES UMPIRES


JENNIFER STEWART/MLB PHOTOS (7)

Mark Carlson, Laz Diaz, Chris Guccione, Marvin Hudson, Jerry Meals, Bill Miller*, Todd Tichenor, Adrian Johnson (Replay Official), David Rackley (Replay Asst.)

*Crew Chief

Roster subject to change

NO.	PLAYER	B/T	W	L	ERA	SO	BB	SV	BIRTHDATE	BIRTHPLACE
PITCHERS										
46	José Alvarado	L/L	0	0	6.00	13	6	0	5/21/95	Maracaibo, Venezuela
70	Nick Anderson	R/R	2	1	0.55	26	3	6	7/5/90	Crosby, MN
63	Diego Castillo	R/R	3	0	1.66	23	11	4	1/18/94	Cabrera, D.R.
84	John Curtiss	R/R	3	0	1.80	25	3	2	4/5/93	Dallas, TX
29	Pete Fairbanks	R/R	6	3	2.70	39	14	0	12/16/93	Milwaukee, WI
61	Josh Fleming	R/L	5	0	2.78	25	7	0	5/18/96	Bridgeton, MO
20	Tyler Glasnow	L/R	5	1	4.08	91	22	0	8/23/93	Newhall, CA
15	Aaron Loup	L/L	3	2	2.52	22	4	0	12/19/87	Raceland, LA
62	Shane McClanahan	L/L	0	0	0.00	0	0	0	4/28/97	Baltimore, MD
50	Charlie Morton	R/R	2	2	4.74	42	10	0	11/12/83	Flemington, NJ
57	Aaron Slegers	R/R	0	0	3.46	19	5	2	9/4/92	Long Beach, CA
4	Blake Snell	L/L	4	2	3.24	63	18	0	12/4/92	Seattle, WA
81	Ryan Thompson	R/R	1	2	4.44	23	8	1	6/26/92	Turner, OR
48	Ryan Yarbrough	R/L	1	4	3.56	44	12	0	12/31/91	Austin, TX

NO.	PLAYER	B/T	AB	H	AVG	HR	RBI	OBP	BIRTHDATE	BIRTHPLACE
CATCHERS										
7	Michael Perez	L/R	84	14	.167	1	13	.237	8/7/92	Bayamon, PR
10	Mike Zunino	R/R	75	11	.147	4	10	.238	3/25/91	Cape Coral, FL
INFIELDERS										
1	Willy Adames	R/R	185	48	.259	8	23	.332	9/2/95	Santiago, D.R.
43	Mike Brosseau	R/R	86	26	.302	5	12	.378	3/15/94	Munster, IN
26	Ji-Man Choi	L/R	122	28	.230	3	16	.331	5/19/91	Incheon, South Korea
2	Yandy Díaz	R/R	114	35	.307	2	11	.428	8/8/91	Sagua la Grande, Cuba
8	Brandon Lowe	L/R	193	52	.269	14	37	.362	7/6/94	Suffolk, VA
18	Joey Wendle	L/R	168	48	.286	4	17	.342	4/26/90	Wilmington, DE
OUTFIELDERS										
56	Randy Arozarena	R/R	64	18	.281	7	11	.382	2/28/95	Havana, Cuba
39	Kevin Kiermaier	L/R	138	30	.217	3	22	.321	4/22/90	Fort Wayne, IN
13	Manuel Margot	R/R	145	39	.269	1	11	.327	9/28/94	San Cristobal, D.R.
17	Austin Meadows	L/L	132	27	.205	4	13	.296	5/3/95	Atlanta, GA
11	Hunter Renfroe	R/R	122	19	.156	8	22	.252	1/28/92	Crystal Springs, MS
25	Yoshi Tsutsugo	L/R	157	31	.197	8	24	.314	11/26/91	Hashimoto, Japan

Manager: Kevin Cash (16). Coaches: Stan Boroski (41), Paul Hoover (24), Rodney Linares (27), Chad Mottola (51), Matt Quatraro (33), Kyle Snyder (23), Ozzie Timmons (30)

Roster subject to change

POSTSEASON 2020

RAYS-ING THE BAR

The Rays and Astros out-punched the rest of the American League for an unlikely ALCS matchup.

ALEX TRAUTWIG/MLB PHOTOS

The Rays won the third AL East title in franchise history and the first since 2010, finishing the regular season an AL-best 20 games above .500. They made quick work of the Blue Jays with a two-game sweep in the Wild Card Series and ousted the Yankees 3-2 in the best-of-five Division Series.

The Astros overcame injuries to key players Justin Verlander, Roberto Osuna and Yordan Alvarez to advance to the postseason for the fourth consecutive year. The Astros swept Minnesota in the Wild Card Series and needed just four games to eliminate Oakland in the Division Series. Houston joins the 1998-2001 Yankees, the 1995-99 Braves and the 2011-14 Cardinals as the only teams to reach the LCS four consecutive years in the Wild Card era.

Rays starter Blake Snell notched the win with five strong innings and Diego Castillo recorded the final five outs for the save in a 2-1 victory over the Astros in Game 1 of the ALCS. Breakout star outfielder Randy Arozarena became just the fifth rookie in Major League history with four-plus home runs in a single postseason. Both Aaron Judge (2017) and Miguel Cabrera ('03) hit four as rookies. Kyle Schwarber ('15) hit five, and Evan Longoria ('08) launched six.

"I think everyone's in awe every time he steps in the box," Rays catcher Mike Zunino said of Arozarena. "He's done everything he possibly could for this lineup. He's a spark plug. If he gets on, he can steal a base, then there's the power surge he's had. He just really ignites our lineup and gives us a bunch of energy."

Charlie Morton pitched five scoreless innings against his former team to lead the Rays to a 4-2 victory over the Astros in Game 2. Outfielder Manuel Margot also shined in the victory, blasting a three-run homer and making a memorable catch in which he tumbled over the wall along the right-field line.

A five-run sixth inning and dazzling defense throughout the game led the Rays to a 5-2 victory in Game 3 and a 3-0 lead in the best-of-seven series. The most significant hits in the sixth-inning rally were a single by Joey Wendle and a double by Hunter Renfroe, both driving in a pair of runs. Renfroe and Kevin Kiermaier both made five-star catches in the outfield, according to Statcast.

"Classic Rays win," Kiermaier said. "Dominant pitching, phenomenal defense, picking our spot to score runs. It just takes one inning and that one momentum swing for us to do damage, and we did that tonight when our pitching and defense was absolutely incredible. That's what we do."

Homers by Jose Altuve and George Springer and a clutch performance by Zack Greinke, who allowed just two runs over six innings, helped the Astros avoid elimination with a 4-3 victory in Game 4. Of the 38 previous teams to fall behind 3-0 in a best-of-seven postseason series, only eight had avoided a sweep and forced Game 5.

"I'm not ready to go home," Astros manager Dusty Baker said. "Nobody's ready to go home. We're ready to go to Dallas [for the World Series in Arlington]. We're still one step closer to the top of that mountain, but we got a couple steep cliffs the next couple days."

The Astros continued to fight off elimination the following day when Carlos Correa called his shot and then delivered a walk-off home run to give the Astros a 4-3 victory in Game 5.

"I knew I was going to end it," said Correa, who also hit a walk-off homer in Game 2 of last year's ALCS against the Yankees. "I could feel my swing was in sync. I could feel my rhythm was good, and I felt like I was going to drive the ball. I believed I could do it."

The Astros used seven pitchers, including five rookies over the first seven innings. Despite pitching on consecutive days while battling a hamstring injury, veteran closer Ryan Pressly notched the final four outs, including two strikeouts.

"This is the postseason," Pressly said after the contest. "There are no days off. You've got to push whatever you're going through to the back of your mind and grind through it. You've got to do whatever you've got to do to stay out there."

Despite the valiant battle put forth by the Astros, the Rays were able to close out the series and return to the Fall Classic for just the second time in club history.

Kiermaier made multiple diving catches in Game 3.

ALEX TRAUTWIG/MLB PHOTOS

LOS ANGELES DODGERS ROSTER

WORLD 2020 SERIES

ALEX TRAUTWIG/MLB PHOTOS

Dave Roberts MANAGER

CHRISTIAN PETERSEN/GETTY IMAGES

Pedro Báez PITCHER

ROB LEITER/MLB PHOTOS

Austin Barnes CATCHER

KATELYN MULCAHY/GETTY IMAGES

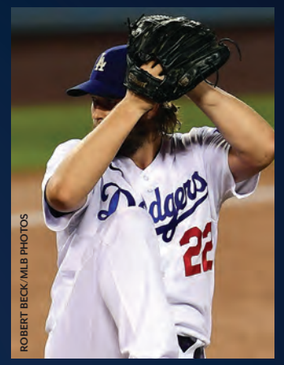
Matt Beaty INFIELD

ROB LEVEY/GETTY IMAGES

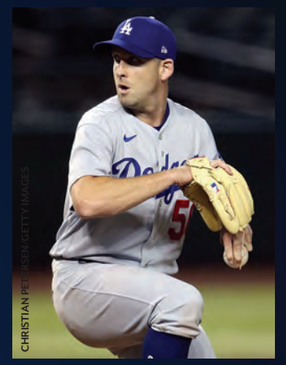
Kenley Jansen PITCHER

KATELYN MULCAHY/GETTY IMAGES

Joe Kelly PITCHER


ROBERT BECK/MLB PHOTOS

Clayton Kershaw PITCHER


CHRISTIAN PETERSEN/GETTY IMAGES

Adam Kolarek PITCHER

ROB LEITER/MLB PHOTOS

Cody Bellinger OUTFIELD

ROB LEITER/MLB PHOTOS

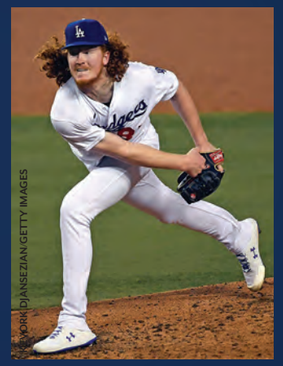
Mookie Betts OUTFIELD

ROBERT BECK/MLB PHOTOS

Walker Buehler PITCHER

RONALD MARTINEZ/GETTY IMAGES

Dylan Floro PITCHER


KEVORK DJANSEZIAN/GETTY IMAGES

Dustin May PITCHER

MATTHEW STOCKMAN/GETTY IMAGES

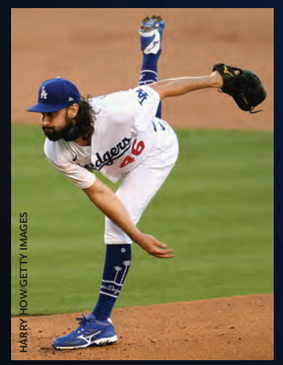
Jake McGee PITCHER

ROB LEITER/MLB PHOTOS

Max Muncy INFIELD

ROB LEITER/MLB PHOTOS

Joc Pederson OUTFIELD


HARRY HOW/GETTY IMAGES

Tony Gonsolin PITCHER

HARRY HOW/GETTY IMAGES

Victor González PITCHER

ASHLEY LANDIS/AP

Brusdar Graterol PITCHER

ROB LEITER/MLB PHOTOS

Kiké Hernández UTILITY

Roster subject to change

ROB LEITER/MLB PHOTOS

AJ Pollock OUTFIELD

DAM GLANZMAN/MLB PHOTOS

Edwin Ríos INFIELD

ROB LEITER/MLB PHOTOS

Corey Seager SHORTSTOP

KEVORK DJANSEZIAN/GETTY IMAGES

Will Smith CATCHER

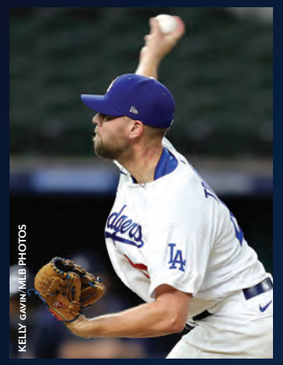
Roster subject to change

LOS ANGELES DODGERS ROSTER

WORLD SERIES 2020

ROB LEITER/MLB PHOTOS

Chris Taylor UTILITY


KELLY GAVIN/MLB PHOTOS

Blake Treinen PITCHER

ROB LEITER/MLB PHOTOS

Justin Turner THIRD BASE

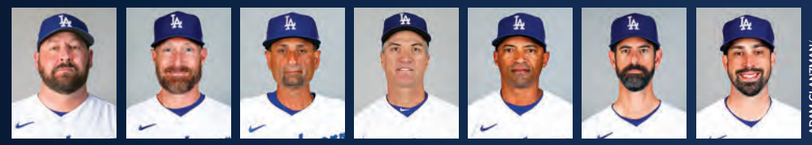
EZRA SHAW/GETTY IMAGES

Julio Urías PITCHER

MARK J. TERRILL/AP

Alex Wood PITCHER

LOS ANGELES DODGERS COACHES


ADAM GLANZMAN/MLB PHOTOS (7)

Josh Bard BULLPEN COACH

Brant Brown HITTING COACH

Dino Ebel THIRD BASE COACH

Bob Geren BENCH COACH

George Lombard FIRST BASE COACH

Mark Prior PITCHING COACH

Robert Van Scoyoc HITTING COACH

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Earvin "Magic" Johnson OWNER

Todd Boehly OWNER

Robert (Bobby) L. Patton Jr. OWNER

Peter Guber OWNER

Billie Jean King OWNER

Ilana Kloss OWNER

Robert L. Plummer OWNER

Alan Smolinisky OWNER

Stan Kasten PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Andrew Friedman PRESIDENT, BASEBALL OPERATIONS

Roster subject to change

NO.	PLAYER	B/T	W	L	ERA	SO	BB	SV	BIRTHDATE	BIRTHPLACE
PITCHERS										
52	Pedro Báez	R/R	0	0	3.18	13	7	2	3/11/88	Bani, D.R.
21	Walker Buehler	R/R	1	0	3.44	42	11	0	7/28/94	Lexington, KY
51	Dylan Floro	L/R	3	0	2.59	19	4	0	12/27/90	Merced, CA
46	Tony Gonsolin	R/R	2	2	2.31	46	7	0	5/14/94	Vacaville, CA
81	Víctor González	L/L	3	0	1.33	23	2	0	11/16/95	Tuxpan, Nayarit, Mexico
48	Brusdar Graterol	R/R	1	2	3.09	13	3	0	8/26/98	Calobozo, Venezuela
74	Kenley Jansen	S/R	3	1	3.33	33	9	11	9/30/87	Willemstad, Curacao
17	Joe Kelly	R/R	0	0	1.80	9	7	0	6/9/88	Anaheim, CA
22	Clayton Kershaw	L/L	6	2	2.16	62	8	0	3/19/88	Dallas, TX
56	Adam Kolarek	L/L	3	0	0.95	13	4	1	1/14/89	Baltimore, MD
85	Dustin May	R/R	3	1	2.57	44	16	0	9/6/97	Justin, TX
41	Jake McGee	L/L	3	1	2.66	33	3	0	8/6/86	San Jose, CA
49	Blake Treinen	R/R	3	3	3.86	22	8	1	6/30/88	Wichita, KS
7	Julio Urías	L/L	3	0	3.27	45	18	0	8/12/96	Culiacan Rosales, Sinaola, Mexico
57	Alex Wood	R/L	0	1	6.39	15	6	0	1/12/91	Charlotte, NC

NO.	PLAYER	B/T	AB	H	AVG	HR	RBI	OBP	BIRTHDATE	BIRTHPLACE
CATCHERS										
15	Austin Barnes	R/R	86	21	.244	1	9	.353	12/28/89	Riverside, CA
16	Will Smith	R/R	114	33	.289	8	25	.401	3/28/95	Louisville, KY
INFIELDERS										
45	Matt Beaty	L/R	50	11	.220	2	5	.278	4/28/93	Snellville, GA
14	Kiké Hernández	R/R	139	32	.230	5	20	.270	8/24/91	San Juan, Puerto Rico
13	Max Muncy	L/R	203	39	.192	12	27	.331	8/25/90	Midland, TX
43	Edwin Rios	L/R	76	19	250	8	17	.301	4/21/94	Caguas, P.R.
5	Corey Seager	L/R	212	65	.307	15	41	.358	4/27/94	Charlotte, NC
10	Justin Turner	R/R	150	46	.307	4	23	.400	11/23/84	Long Beach, CA
OUTFIELDERS										
35	Cody Bellinger	L/L	213	51	.239	12	30	.333	7/13/95	Scottsdale, AZ
50	Mookie Betts	R/R	219	64	.292	16	39	.366	10/7/92	Nashville, TN
31	Joc Pederson	L/L	121	23	.190	7	16	.285	4/21/92	Palo Alto, CA
11	AJ Pollock	R/R	196	54	.276	16	34	.314	12/5/87	Hebron, CT
3	Chris Taylor	R/R	185	50	.270	8	32	.366	8/29/90	Virginia Beach, VA

Manager: Dave Roberts (30). Coaches: Josh Bard (54), Brant Brown (73), Dino Ebel (91), Bob Geren (88), George Lombard (92), Mark Prior (99), Robert Van Scoyoc (72)

Roster subject to change

POSTSEASON 2020

DODGING A BULLET

The Braves and Dodgers blew through the National League and collided on the path to the World Series.

Fueled by one of the most powerful lineups in the Majors, the Braves slugged their way to a third consecutive NL East title. However, it was pitching that led the Braves to a sweep of Cincinnati in the Wild Card Series. With a pair of shutout wins in the best-of-three series, the Braves became the first team in postseason history to hold a team scoreless over the first 22 innings of a series. The Braves continued their dominance in the Division Series, eliminating the Marlins with a three-game sweep.

The Dodgers compiled an MLB-best record of 43-17 during the regular season, earning their eighth consecutive postseason berth. Led by the offensive output of Mookie Betts and Corey Seager, and the pitching of ace Clayton Kershaw, the Dodgers coasted through the shortened 60-game regular season. The Dodgers held Milwaukee to only two runs in a three-game sweep of the Wild Card Series, followed by a sweep of the Padres in the Division Series to reach the NL Championship Series for the fourth time in five years.

Allowing only one run in six innings, Braves starter Max Fried outlasted his Dodgers counterpart, Walker Buehler, and with Game 1 tied, 1-1, in the top of the ninth inning, Austin Riley's solo homer ignited the Braves' rally to a 5-1 victory.

KELLY GAVIN/MLB PHOTOS

"I love it for (Riley)," Braves first baseman Freddie Freeman said. "He's been battling, going through some ups and downs his first couple of years. For him to have that moment, the biggest home run of his life, I'm so happy for him."

Freeman's second homer in as many games powered a four-run fifth, leading the Braves to an 8-7 Game 2 win.

"Freddie is one of the most consistent players I've ever played against, played with or been around," said Braves closer Mark Melancon, who got the save. "If there was one word to sum him up, it's consistency."

Atlanta starting pitcher Ian Anderson opened the game with four scoreless innings, becoming the first pitcher since Christy Mathewson in 1905 to throw at least four scoreless innings in each of his first three career postseason outings.

A postseason-record three first-inning home runs, including a grand slam by Max Muncy, highlighted an 11-run opening inning in the Dodgers' 15-3 Game 3 rout. It was the most runs scored in a single inning in postseason history.

"There are not too many things that are cooler than that," Muncy said.

The Dodgers' 15 runs were scored in the first three innings, the most runs through three innings by a team in postseason history.

A clutch performance on the mound by starter Bryce Wilson and a dominate night at the plate by Marcell Ozuna led the Braves to a 10-2 victory in Game 4 and a 3-1 series lead.

Wilson, who spent most of the season at the team's alternate training site, allowed just one hit and one run in six innings, opposing Dodgers ace Clayton Kershaw.

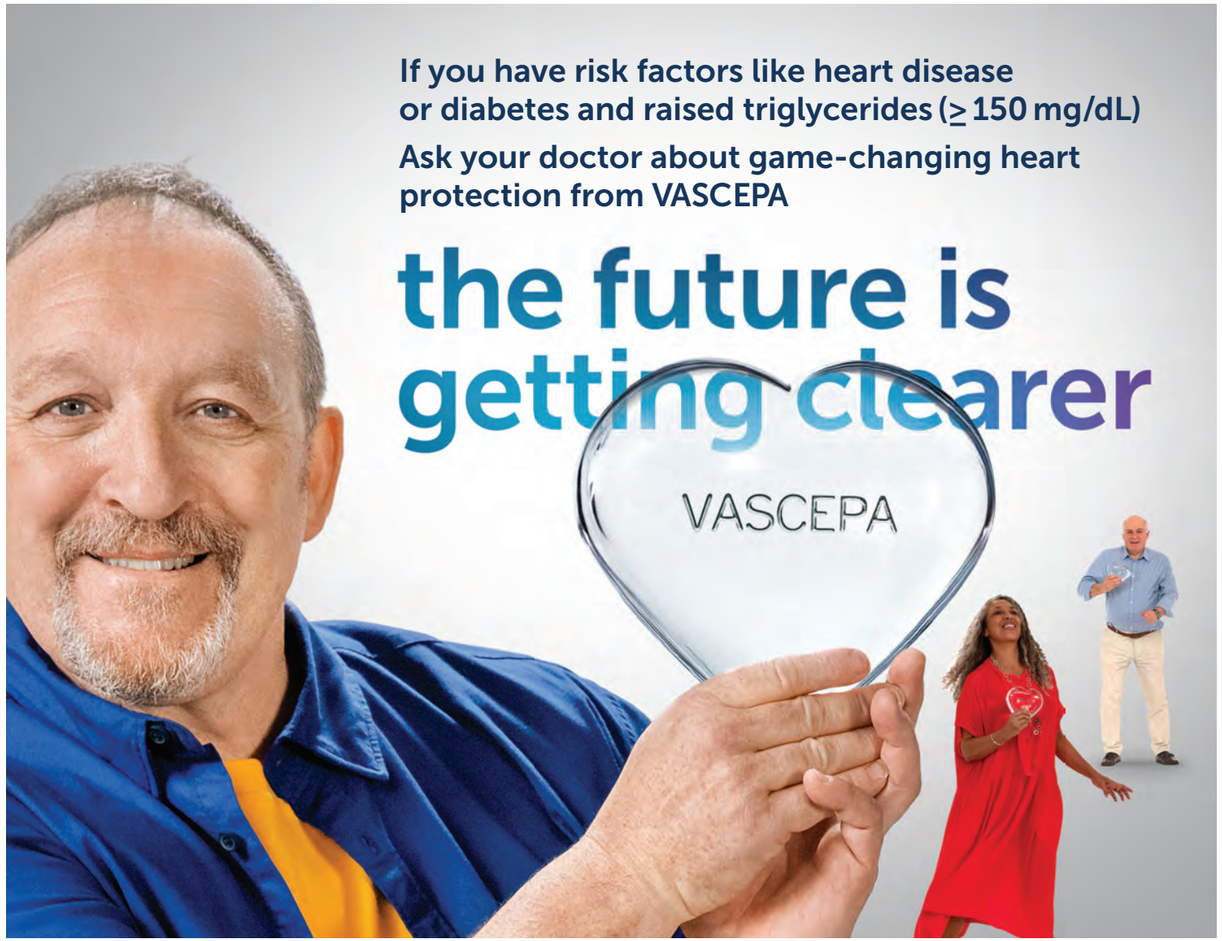
"It's a great honor to get to pitch against Kershaw," said Wilson, making only his eighth Major League start. "I was super happy to get the team the win and one step closer to the World Series."

Ozuna was 4-for-5 with two homers, four RBIs and a Braves-postseason-record 11 total bases. He is the only player in Braves postseason history with at least four hits, two home runs and four RBIs in a game, and he is the first player in baseball to do it since the Astros' Carlos Correa in the 2015 American League Division Series.

Down but not out, the Dodgers came all the way back to win a seven-game NLCS and return to the World Series for the third time in four years.

The Dodgers posted a record 11 runs in the first inning of Game 3.

KELLY GAVIN/MLB PHOTOS



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PATIENT INFORMATION
VASCEPA® (pronounced vas-EE-puh)
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Before taking VASCEPA, tell your doctor about all of your medical conditions, including if you:
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- have a liver problem.
- have a pancreas problem.
- are allergic to fish or shellfish. It is not known if people who are allergic to fish or shellfish are also allergic to VASCEPA.
- are pregnant, or planning to become pregnant. It is not known if VASCEPA will harm your unborn baby.
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Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and dietary or herbal supplements.

VASCEPA can interact with certain other medicines that you are taking.

Especially tell your doctor if you take medicines that affect your blood clotting (anticoagulants or blood thinners).

How should I take VASCEPA?
- Take VASCEPA exactly as your doctor tells you to take it.
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- Do not take more capsules than what is prescribed by your doctor.
  - If you are prescribed the 0.5 gram capsules, you should not take more than 8 capsules each day with food.
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- Take VASCEPA capsules whole. Do not break, crush, dissolve, or chew VASCEPA capsules before swallowing.
- If you miss a dose of VASCEPA, take it as soon as you remember. However, if you miss one day of VASCEPA, do not double your dose when you take it.
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- **Bleeding.** Serious bleeding can happen in people who take VASCEPA. Your risk of bleeding may increase if you are also taking a blood thinner medicine.

If you have liver problems and are taking VASCEPA, your doctor should do blood tests during treatment.

The most common side effects of VASCEPA include: muscle and joint pain; swelling of the hands, legs, or feet; constipation; gout; and heart rhythm problems (atrial fibrillation).

These are not all the possible side effects of VASCEPA. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

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- Store VASCEPA at room temperature between 68° to 77° F (20° to 25° C).
- Safely throw away medicine that is out of date or no longer needed.

Keep VASCEPA and all medicine out of the reach of children.

General information about the safe and effective use of VASCEPA. Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Patient Information leaflet. Do not use VASCEPA for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give VASCEPA to other people, even if they have the same symptoms that you have. It may harm them. You can ask your pharmacist or healthcare provider for information about VASCEPA that is written for health professionals.

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Active ingredient: icosapent ethyl
Inactive ingredients: tocopherol, gelatin, glycerin, maltitol, sorbitol, and purified water

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THE RIGHT MAN FOR THE JOB

In an uncertain 2020, the Rays clubhouse benefits more than ever before from Manager Kevin Cash's energy, enthusiasm and positivity.

By Marc Topkin, Tampa Bay Times

With no Rays lineups to tinker with on a daily basis or pitchers to take out of games during the couple months baseball was shut down, Rays manager Kevin Cash found ways to stay occupied.

He handled P.E. responsibilities during remote learning for his and wife Emily's three kids — well, at least until the bike ramp he built for their 7-year-old son led to a crash and their 13-year-old daughter banged up her knee playing basketball with him.

He bought a Big Green Egg and learned how to smoke pork. He kept track of three dogs (a black lab and two Shih Tzus he jokes are like cats) and a Christmas-delivered bearded dragon named, of all things, Ray. He proved himself pretty handy with some projects around their waterfront St. Petersburg house. He led some family boat and bike rides. And he did some Netflix.

In his sixth season, Cash is baseball's 3rd-longest-tenured manager with his current team.

WILL VRAGOVIC/TAMPA BAY RAYS

There was some work, too. Plenty of phone calls and Zoom meetings with players and staff, dealing with natural fear about the unknowns of the coronavirus pandemic and negativity about a season getting played, though not too much moping, per house rules.

Overall, there really was a great benefit in getting to relax and spend unexpected quality time with Emily and the kids — even taking part in their theme night dress-up dinners — and also his mom, who quarantined with them.

"He just had to keep himself busy," Emily said, "and he did a pretty good job of it."

But it was obvious that Cash, with 20-plus straight years in the game, was missing baseball.

"Oh gosh, yes," Emily said. "The camaraderie with the coaches was definitely something he missed. Being with the guys talking baseball, because there's only so much baseball I can talk, or really want to talk. … He definitely missed baseball, missed that camaraderie, the fraternity, that part of it."

Cash is back where he should be, at Tropicana Field, among the guys, leading a team among the chic favorites to win it all.

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"A really good place," Emily said.

And that's a good thing for the Rays, especially now.

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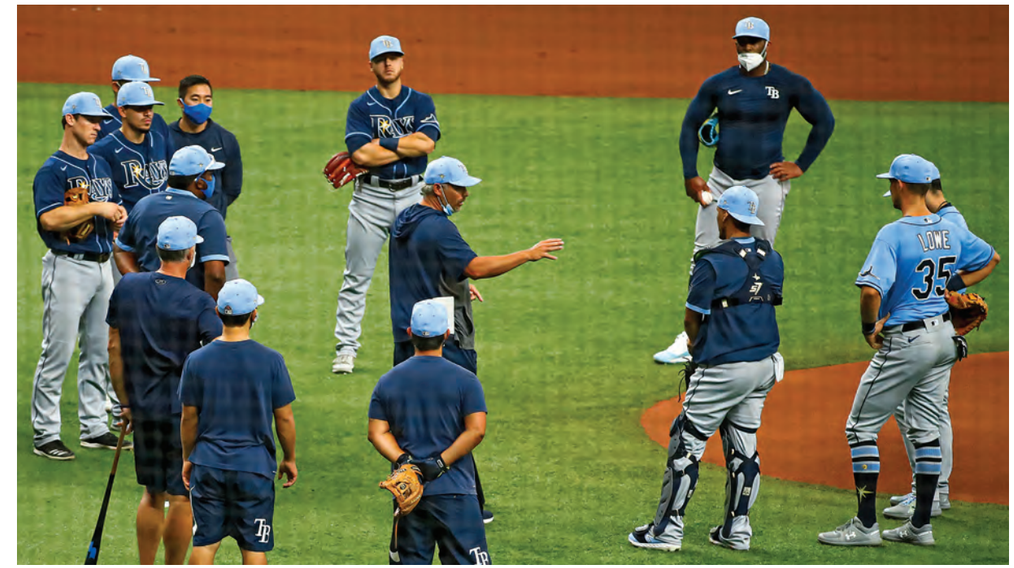

Last season at age 41, Cash became the youngest AL East manager to reach the postseason since Buck Showalter (39) and Kevin Kennedy (41) did so in 1995.

WILL VRAGOVIC/TAMPA BAY RAYS

Uncertainty is pretty much the default status in every clubhouse right now. Players are wrestling with health concerns about wives, kids and other relatives. Weighing their own risks in playing and traveling as they assess and adjust to the new safety protocols. Worrying what happens if they catch COVID-19.

Coaches and team officials, meanwhile, are constantly evaluating contingencies well beyond normal injury issues as a player's positive or delayed test, exposure or symptoms can force them to suddenly juggle roster spots, pitching plans and lineups based on who is available that day.

So you need someone like Cash to scream "Mendle!" to greet infielder Joey Wendle with his unofficial nickname as he runs onto the field. To yell "You guys stink!" to the major-league hitters that the 42-year-old former catcher is — much to his own amusement — getting out in a modified batting practice. To taunt shortstop Willy Adames through a ground ball drill so fierce you'd think there were higher stakes than bragging rights for the day.

Cajoling some players, cheerleading others and almost always chirping, Cash is usually up to something.

You can literally see the bounce in his step as he moves constantly around the field, taking part in different drills, meeting informally with staff and bosses, always watching. You definitely hear it, whether he's on the field, in the dugout or sitting still for a rare moment, hollering something.

"He's been great, obviously," pitcher Ryan Yarbrough said. "Since I came up in 2018, he's been the exact same guy. I feel like that's why you see how loose and how much fun we have, it starts with him. Because you can tell how much fun he's having out there and it really translates to the players, and how we go out there and perform on the field."

"Especially with (COVID-19) going on right now, it not being a normal situation … Everybody's been putting us in a good situation to perform, making our lives really easy with all the testing going on."

Even when you're on the other end of Cash's teasing.

"Even when he's talking trash to you, it's good," Adames said. "He's always pushing you to work harder, to get better. And that's the thing I love about him. Like with me, he's always competing. He's trying to beat me

when I'm catching ground balls and I love that because I'm a competitor. So I think that's how you get better, competing with each other. And for him to do that it's a really good thing for us."

It's not all fun and games, though.

Cash is not one for long — if any — speeches, but he has his ways to get a message across.

"Cash is just — he's Cash," reliever Jalen Beeks said. "He's always been energetic. He's always brought that to the table. He's always been super encouraging. Now he's been, 'Just do your best with what we've got right now, guys. We're all in this together. We're going to pull through this and we're going to try to win a World Series. That's our goal — stay safe, win a World Series.' He's been very clear on everything, and very energetic."

This is Cash's sixth season as manager — making him the third-longest tenured with his team in the game, behind Oakland's Bob Melvin and Cleveland's Terry Francona — and he remains just as enthusiastic as when he started in 2015, replacing the departed Joe Maddon.

Cash has more confidence now, a result of two 90-win seasons and two trips to the playoffs in the past three years, and the security of a contract that was reworked after the 2018 season to run through 2024 with an option, basically a six-year extension for about $10 million.

And he is a bit more emboldened to make the unorthodox strategic moves that rank him among the most challenging to manage against, drawing compliments from friends, foe and neutral observers.

Cash said his priority is being that same guy the players and staff have known no matter the circumstance.

"This shouldn't change us," he said. "We might have to be (paying) a little more attention to detail with the guidelines and stuff like that. But as far as the personality in the dugout, on the field working out before a game and definitely during a game, that's got to be consistent.

"We're so fortunate that we've got such a good staff that recognizes that and has a bunch of loose personalities. We all want to get after it when it's time to, but this game is tough enough to play. If you take the fun out of it or you show the inconsistency, I'm not sure that's going to help any player."

Infielder Brandon Lowe said Cash provides plenty of fun.

"He keeps it light in the clubhouse and on the field," Lowe said. "It's always nice to have anywhere that we're doing stuff to keep it fun, keep it airy.

"It definitely helps with everything that's been going on in the world."

Cash's leadership has gained national recognition, finishing 3rd in the BBWAA's AL Manager of the Year voting in both 2018 and '19.

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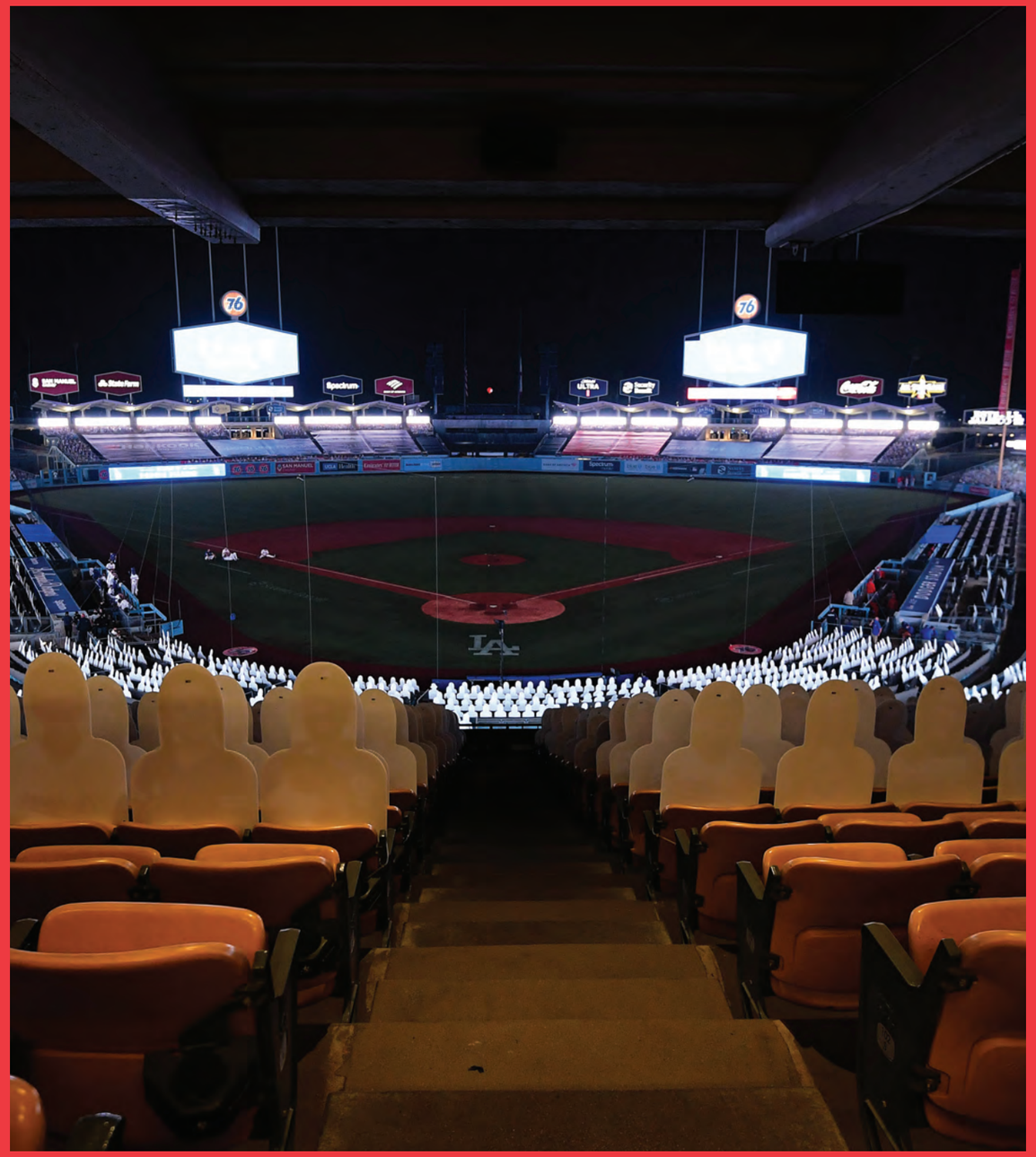

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2020 SNAPSHOTS

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ROBERT BECK/MLB PHOTOS

KELLY GAVIN/MLB PHOTOS (2)

By Bill Ladson

negro league legends

After Jackie Robinson integrated Major League Baseball in 1947, Negro League players showed how talented they were if given a chance to shine on the big league stage. From 1949 to '63, for example, Negro League players won 10 MVP awards, nine of them coming in the National League with Elston Howard winning the American League award in 1963. In honor of the 100th anniversary of the Negro Leagues, MLB.com looked at the 13 Negro League players who were among the most influential in the Major Leagues.

NEGRO LEAGUE MUSEUM (BANKS); LOUIS REQUENA/MLB PHOTOS (AARON); NBHFM/MLB PHOTOS

Hank Aaron INDIANAPOLIS CLOWNS
Who would have thought this cross-handed hitter would become one of the greatest players in Major League history? He played under the national radar for much of his big-league career until he surpassed Babe Ruth, becoming the all-time career leader in home runs. Aaron remained the home run king with 755 until Barry Bonds broke the mark in 2007. Aaron did more than just hit homers — he's the all-time leader in RBIs (2,297) and total bases (6,856).

Ernie Banks KANSAS CITY MONARCHS
He was always willing to play two games a day. That's how much he loved the game of baseball. He also had the skills to go with that passion. Even though the Cubs were a second division club during his peak years, Banks won National League MVP awards in 1958 and '59. He ended up playing his entire 19-year career with the Cubs without ever reaching the postseason. But one can't help but notice the enthusiasm he displayed on the field. No wonder he's known as Mr. Cub.

Roy Campanella BALTIMORE ELITE GIANTS
He learned his craft from mentor Biz Mackey and it paid off, as Campanella became one of the best catchers in Major League history. The awards tell the story for Campy, winning three NL MVPs, while guiding the Dodgers to five pennants and a World Series title in 1955. Campanella's career ended after he was paralyzed in a car accident in January 1958, but he became a mainstay of the Dodgers' community-service division until his death in 1993.

Larry Doby NEWARK EAGLES
He broke the color barrier in the American League on July 5, 1947, just 11 weeks after Jackie Robinson played his first game with the Dodgers. Like Robinson, Doby put together a career to remember. He was a seven-time All-Star, twice led the league in home runs ('52 and '54) and won his only RBI title in '54 by driving in 126. Doby's biggest highlight was helping the Indians win the World Series over the Boston Braves in 1948, going 7-for-22 (.318) with a homer and two RBIs.

Junior Gilliam GIANTS
"Devil" was his nickname because of his antics in the pool hall, but he became famous and respectable for his baseball skills. Gilliam was a mentor to Astros manager Dusty Baker and second father to a lot of players who crossed his path in the Major Leagues. Gilliam debuted with the Dodgers in 1953 and remained with the organization until his death in '78. He took over for Jackie Robinson at second base when Robinson moved to the outfield in '53, winning Rookie of the Year honors. By '64, he was a player/coach before becoming a full-time first base coach after the '66 season. Gilliam often gave younger players history lessons on Robinson and the Negro Leagues, especially during his time with the Giants. When the Dodgers went to St. Louis, he would take Baker to Cool Papa Bell's house. Baker was like a fly on a wall, taking in the stories told by Gilliam and Bell.

Elston Howard MONARCHS
He was more than just the first African American to play with the Yankees. Howard had a baseball career Yankees fans will never forget. Not only did he play in the postseason 10 times, Howard helped the Yankees win four World Series titles. Let's not forget that he was the first African American to win the AL MVP. Howard's leadership skills behind the plate didn't go unnoticed. There he directed his pitchers

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on what to throw on a nightly basis. You will not get any complaints from Hall of Famer Whitey Ford, who had his best season in 1961 with Howard behind the dish. Ford won the AL Cy Young by winning a career-high 25 games that year. The Yankees were not the only team that noticed Howard's leadership skills behind the plate. The Red Sox picked him up in early August of 1967 and it paid off, as they advanced to the World Series before losing to the Cardinals in seven games.

Monte Irvin EAGLES

Irvin had been an outstanding player during his nine years with the Eagles, and became known as a five-tool player. Even Dodgers GM Branch Rickey was impressed by what he saw in Irvin and had considered him to be the first to break the color barrier. Irvin joined the Giants in 1949, but at age 30, he was not quite the player he had been with the Eagles. Still, he helped lead the Giants to two pennants (1951 and '54) and one World Series title ('54). His best season was in '51, when he led the team in WAR (6.9), batting average (.312), home runs (24) and RBIs (121). Perhaps more important, however, was that Irvin became a mentor to Willie Mays, who became one of the best players in baseball history. Irvin was also part of the Major Leagues' first all-black outfield that featured Mays and Hank Thompson.

Sam Jethroe CLEVELAND BUCKEYES

After spending eight years in the Negro Leagues, mainly with the Buckeyes, Jethroe was given a chance to play for the Braves in 1950 and became the oldest player to win Rookie of the Year honors at age 34. He was second on the team in runs scored, and finished first with 35 stolen bases. Jethroe showed he had another year in the tank, finishing third on the team in WAR (4.8), and leading the team in runs scored and stolen bases. By 1954, however, Jethroe's Major League career was over. It didn't help that he was a below-average outfielder and some baseball people believed he was a much older man than his official age.

Lou Johnson MONARCHS

He began his Major League career as a journeyman until he joined his fourth team, the Dodgers, in 1965. After Tommy Davis broke his ankle earlier that year, Johnson was given a chance to play every day in left field and helped the Dodgers win two NL pennants and a World Series title in '65. Johnson had an impressive World Series, going 8-for-21 (.296) with two home runs and four RBIs. His shining moment came in Game 7 against Twins left-hander Jim Kaat. Johnson led off the fourth inning and hit a solo home run to give Los Angeles a 1-0 lead. It was all left-hander Sandy Koufax would need to win the game and the Series MVP award.

Willie Mays BIRMINGHAM BLACK BARONS

Former manager Leo Durocher called Mays the best all-around player he ever saw, and one could understand why Durocher felt that way. Mays could do it all – run, hit for average and power, and play an outstanding center field. All you need to do is look at the video of Mays making that over-the-shoulder catch in Game 1 of the 1954 World Series off the bat of Vic Wertz. The awards Mays won were many – two NL MVP awards, 11 Gold Gloves and 20 All-Star Game appearances, including an MVP award in the 1968 Midsummer Classic.

Minnie Minoso NEW YORK CUBANS

If it were left up to him, Minoso would be playing forever. He played 28 years in professional baseball, including one big league game in 1980 at the age of 54. But longevity is just part of his legacy. Minoso was an exciting player to watch when he was with the White Sox. During his peak years, he was often among the league leaders in triples and runs scored.

AP (ROBINSON, CAMPANELLA); NBHFM/MLB PHOTOS (PAIGE); NEGRO LEAGUE MUSEUM (MAYS, MINOSO)

Don Newcombe EAGLES

Not only did he win Rookie of the Year honors in 1949, Newcombe went on to become one of the best pitchers in Dodgers history. He missed two years of action because of military service in 1952 and '53, but came back to the big leagues and didn't skip a beat, winning the Cy Young and NL MVP awards in 1956. During his 10 years in the big leagues, Newcombe would go on to win 149 games and help the Dodgers capture three pennants and a World Series title in '55. Not only was he a great pitcher, Newcombe also helped himself at the plate. He could hit for power and was often used as a pinch-hitter. Newcombe's best year at the plate was in '55, when he hit a career-high .359 with seven home runs and 23 RBIs.

Buck O'Neil MONARCHS

In addition to a distinguished career as a player and manager in the Negro Leagues, O'Neil also became one of the better scouts in Major League Baseball. As a scout for the Cubs, O'Neil signed Lou Brock, Lee Smith, Joe Carter and Oscar Gamble to their first professional contracts. Two of those players – Brock and Smith — became Hall of Famers, while Carter and Gamble became impactful power hitters.

Satchel Paige MONARCHS

He was 41 when his playing days in the Negro Leagues ended after the 1947 season. Robinson had just broken the color barrier, and Paige decided to take his chances in the Major Leagues. At that time, many scouts wondered how old he really was, and if there was enough in the tank to get Major League hitters out. Indians owner Bill Veeck took a chance and signed Paige for the 1948 season. As it turned out, Paige was a productive pitcher for Cleveland as a starter and reliever, going 6-2 with a 2.48 ERA as part of the last Indians World Series championship team. He was the first African American to pitch in the World Series, with his only appearance in the Fall Classic occurring in a Game 5 loss to the Boston Braves. He pitched 2/3 of an inning without allowing a run.

Paige stayed with the Indians for the 1949 season, going 4-7 with a 3.04 ERA in 31 games (five starts) at age 42. After a season with Minot in the Manitoba-Dakota League, he and Veeck reunited with the St. Louis Browns from 1951-53. In his final full season in the Major Leagues, at age 46, Paige went 3-9 with a 3.51 ERA (an ERA+ of 119) over 57 games (four starts). Paige continued to play in various leagues for another 13 years, finally ending his days as a professional baseball player in 1966 at the age of 59.

Jackie Robinson MONARCHS

The one and only. Robinson had a Major League career for the ages. Much of that we know. It starts, of course, on April 15, 1947, when he became the first African-American to break the color barrier and play in the Major Leagues, where his skills made him one of the best to play the game, and his bravery changed the game forever. He was a stellar defender and had dazzling speed, as well as a bat that helped the Dodgers win six pennants and one World Series title during his 10 years in MLB. His impact was felt right away, as evidenced by his 1947 National League Rookie of the Year Award and the '49 NL MVP Award just two years later. ◆

Bill Ladson has been a reporter for MLB.com since 2002. He covered the Nationals/Expos from 2002-2016. Follow him on Twitter at @ladsonbill24.

Sign of Things To Come

From the moment scouts first laid eyes on these eventual postseason heroes, they knew no stage would be too big. And the World Series rings followed.

By Alexis Brudnicki

BRAD MANGIN/MLB PHOTOS

THEY ARE THE MOMENTS THAT STAND out above the rest.

For players who return to the postseason year after year as mainstays in lineups, rotations and bullpens, the expectations rise with the stakes. But to the occasion, so do they.

Game 7 of the 2006 National League Championship Series still stands out for Cardinals president of baseball operations, John Mozeliak. Yadier Molina was a 23-year-old catcher playing in his third MLB season — and third NLCS. Jeff Suppan started for St. Louis against the Mets at Shea Stadium. The right-hander was effective, allowing one run on two hits over seven innings, but also erratic, issuing five walks.

Molina helped guide him around potential potholes by handling Suppan and the rest of the Cardinals staff in a way that exceeded his experience. Then, he put the series to bed.

With the game tied, 1-1, in the top of the ninth, Molina sent the first pitch he saw from Aaron Heilman over the fence to give his squad a two-run advantage it would not relinquish. The Cardinals went on to defeat the Tigers in a five-game World Series.

"The impact he had in that game was incredible," Mozeliak recalled. "That's when you realize the greatness."

It can be easier to see greatness on the grandest of stages, in the biggest of situations and with everything on the line. But the road there is a journey of identification and development. It's one that begins with the boots on the ground, the scouts who send in that very first report on a player. They are the ones tasked with trying to extrapolate what qualities they see in a teenager that might be evidence of a future postseason star.

Some of what drew the Cardinals to Molina also stood out when the organization scouted Albert Pujols, who also would become a cornerstone piece in an organization that shifted toward building perennial contenders by focusing on the draft-and-development process under Mozeliak. And it has worked.

Since 2000, the Cardinals have appeared in the postseason 13 times, advanced to the World Series four times, and captured two World Series titles. Only the Red Sox have more in the same period, and during that stretch, they've had a losing record just once.

Just ahead of this run of excellence emerged a dynasty in the American League that also saw franchise players rise from within the organization's farm system. From 1990-92, the Yankees signed or drafted four players — Derek Jeter, Mariano Rivera, Jorge Posada and Andy Pettitte — who would go on to be remembered as the "Core Four."

Together, they won four championships in five seasons, beginning in 1996. The foursome also won rings with the Yankees in 2009.

Examples of such sustained success are rare, as are the players that help their organizations achieve it. While the verdict is still out on whether there might be a true recipe for playoff success or performance under pressure, there are some essential ingredients that scouting departments found long before these players became household names.

BASEBALL IQ

Molina had plenty of name recognition by the time the Cardinals chose the Puerto Rican high schooler in the fourth-round of the 2000 MLB Draft. His older brothers Jose and Bengie already had broken into the big leagues. Still, Mozeliak, then the Cardinals' scouting director, wasn't sure a deal would get done.

"I remember having Steve Turco, our area scout in Florida at the time, see Yadi play in an American Legion tournament, and he called me after and said, 'So Mo, what's the issue here?'" Mozeliak said. "I told him he wanted more than slot, and I was trying to determine what dollars to put on him.

"And he said, 'Give him anything he wants.'"

The Cardinals did not let him get away, eventually coming to an agreement on a $325,000 signing bonus.

The potential for greatness was there, evidenced by Molina's ability to block, move, throw and show a mature feel for the game.

"He probably could have caught in the big leagues his first year in the Minors," Mozeliak said of his now veteran catcher, who has accrued nine All-Star appearances, nine Gold Gloves, four Platinum Gloves, one Silver Slugger and two World Series rings. "The nuances of catching he understood. He had two brothers who were catching in the big leagues. He had an incredible baseball IQ."

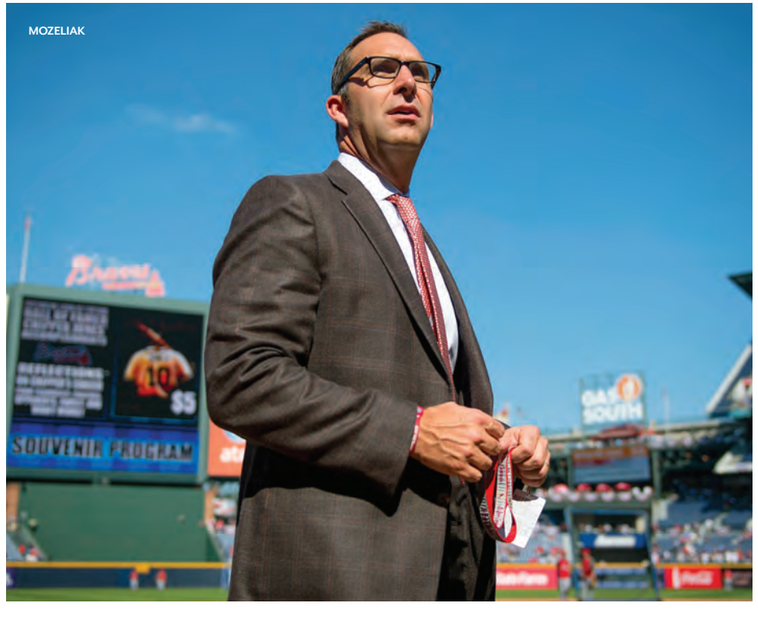
Baseball intelligence is impossible to measure or quantify. But bloodlines in the sport can certainly help it along, while also catching a scout's attention.

More than a decade before the youngest Molina brother signed, another young player from Puerto Rico was garnering attention. The Yankees drafted Posada, son of a Major League scout, twice out of Calhoun (Ala.) Community College before signing him in 1990.

The attribute that stood out most to area scout Leon Wurth was Posada's disinclination to failure. For Brian Sabean, then the Yankees' scouting director, it was the catcher's ability and drive to fight through adversity.

"I don't know if you can learn to deal with failure or if he was just born with it," Wurth said. "But he was born with a competitive nature that was not going to allow him to fail. ... The way he held himself, there was an air about him."

"When you have a grit about you or a level of determination like he did, those are indicators," Sabean said of high-stakes performers. "His story's very interesting because he's from Puerto Rico, was recruited to junior college really sight unseen, didn't have a full grasp of the English language, and he faced some adversity early on, even to go to junior college and then in experiencing some racism therein. His constitution as a person



MOZELIAK

RICH ADDICKS/MLB PHOTOS

allowed him as a Major League player to have a tougher skin."

DETERMINATION

While an advanced baseball IQ can be a harbinger of future success, there's little doubt that a strong work ethic and unshakeable sense of determination are also ingredients scouts seek.

When Sabean, now executive vice president of the Giants, was first introduced to Rivera, the Panama native was working toward owning an automobile repair shop in the fishing village of Puerto Caimito. He had grown up playing more soccer than baseball, but scout Chico Heron and Latin American coordinator Herb Rayburn saw glimpses of long-term potential on the diamond.

The Yankees signed the future Hall of Famer in 1990, when he was an athletic, strike-throwing 20-year-old with great balance in his delivery. He had standout baseball instincts despite not growing up in the game, and his dedication to the sport really came through a couple years later when he had to work his way back from right elbow surgery.

"Looking back, for somebody to go through that at such a young age is really a testament to his commitment to want to do this, because you're talking about an injury that could have been career-ending in some cases," Sabean said. "And to come back from it and then continually improve, which he did each year, is pretty amazing. His story in general is pretty amazing."

With a 0.70 ERA in 96 appearances (141 innings), Rivera still ranks as the postseason ERA leader among pitchers with at least 50 innings. He also racked up 13 All-Star appearances, an ALCS MVP Award, World Series MVP honors and those five championship rings.

Another man who knows something about accruing accolades is Albert Pujols. The Dominican-born infielder was drafted as a 13th-rounder in 1999 out of Maple Woods (Mo.) Community College without Mozeliak ever laying eyes on him.

"He's such a rare talent," Mozeliak said. "It's hard to articulate. I don't want to say it came easy to him, because he was a very hard worker, but when he worked at something, he could do it. He had the adaptability to play multiple positions, and even when he hurt his elbow, he still figured out a way to throw. He just found ways to be successful."

Like his former teammate Molina, Pujols offered early evidence of future greatness.

"When he was wearing a Cardinals uniform, he was literally one of the best players on the planet," Mozeliak said. "It's hard for me to say we were surprised as we watched it come. When I think back to his first Major League game or his first week in the big leagues, it was shocking how easily he fit in. But thinking about his career and going back 20 years, it was almost like he was predestined to be great. I hate to use the word 'expected,' but that's somewhat how you felt with it. ... He was just a rare find."

Pujols' list of accolades now includes a Rookie of the Year Award, two Gold Glove Awards, six Silver Sluggers, 10 All-Star appearances, one batting

POSADA

PUJOLS

RICH PILLING/MLB PHOTOS (POSADA); JOHN REID III/MLB PHOTOS

PETTITTE

MLB PHOTOS

title, three MVP Awards, one NLCS MVP honor, more postseason homers (19) than anyone over the past two decades, and two World Series championships. That level of consistency and longevity rarely has been matched, in baseball or in any sport.

ENDURANCE

Pettitte, the Yanks' 22nd-round pick in '90, was selected out of high school in the draft-and-follow days. New York followed him to San Jacinto (Tex.) College, where he showed enough raw talent in the body of a football player that area scout Joe Robison didn't need to do much convincing of his bosses.

"He had a good delivery, but he needed some polish," Sabean said. "As it turned out, that came as the result of him going to junior college, interestingly enough, like Jorge. He got stronger in the right way, and he polished his delivery. And of course, along the way [he] learned other pitches and how to command the strike zone."

While certainly desirable qualities, they were not a guarantee of what was to come in an 18-year MLB career that concluded with three All-Star appearances, an ALCS MVP and five World Series rings. An impressive big-stage performer, Pettitte made 44 postseason starts in his career. He won 19 of them.

"When I first saw him, he already had great mound presence for a young age," Sabean said. "He really was unflappable, and he had a good feel for pitching; of what he wanted to do on the mound. Winning percentage aside, because he only won 20-plus games in a season twice, he was a guy who was going to log innings, and somebody who was going to be really stable for us in the rotation."

One month after Pettitte made his debut, a future star shortstop arrived in the Bronx. When area scout Dick Groch filed his report on Jeter, he didn't temper expectations. Ahead of the Yankees selecting Jeter sixth overall in 1992, Groch projected him to be a future Hall of Famer.

Sabean, too, got to see the young phenom not long before the Draft when he joined Groch and Don Lindberg, then the organization's western scouting supervisor, on a blistery spring day in northern Michigan. That sealed the deal for Sabean.

"It was cold, and anybody would have been challenged because of the elements," Sabean said. "And in Derek's case, he was nursing an ankle injury. But his baseball actions and athletic ability really shined, as crazy as that sounds. I don't remember what he did during the game, but I remember getting in the car and Don Lindberg telling me, 'There's no way if this kid was on the West Coast that he wouldn't be the first pick,' and that really resonated with me."

The commonality among all of these players at the start of their careers was, of course, talent. But each augmented that ability with other qualities — passion, determination, feel, intelligence, consistency and grit — that, once combined in a mixing bowl, produced future stars.

For the scouts who discovered them and the teams that took a chance, the reward came in rings, so many rings.

"There are things that make up greatness, and the majority of the great players that play our game have those attributes," Mozeliak said. "It's almost like they have ambition. They want to be the very best. But there are a lot of players who want to be great, but they don't achieve it. They did." ◆

Alexis Brudnicki is a Canada-based Baseball Development and Special Projects reporter for MLB.com.

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THE battle for NEW YORK

After four years of Interleague Play reigniting the Yankees-Mets rivalry, the October iteration of the 2000 Subway Series brought borough bragging rights to a whole new level.

By Anthony DiComo and Bryan Hoch

THE 4 TRAIN STOPPED JUST OUTSIDE OF THE OLD YANKEE STADIUM, AND IMAGERY OF SUBWAY CARS FITTINGLY DOMINATED NEW YORK CITY IN OCTOBER OF 2000.

JED JACOBSOHN/GETTY IMAGES

Over the course of more than four decades sharing New York City's brightest lights, the Mets' and Yankees' battle for bragging rights was settled in schoolyards and barrooms. The franchises' fortunes ebbed and flowed; the Mets were on top in 1969, the Yanks in the late 1970s, the Mets again in 1986. Playing home games less than eight miles apart, they occupied the same space only in our imaginations.

Interleague play changed that. The what-if arguments became reality at a juncture when both New York teams were as relevant as ever. As the Yankees reeled off win after win during their late 1990s dynasty, the Mets developed into a team with potential. Beginning in 1997, the first four installments of the Subway Series were hotly contested: the clubs split six games during the '99 season, ending with both clubs reaching the playoffs concurrently for the first time.

That October, the Mets fell in a dramatic National League Championship Series to the Braves, who went on to get swept in a less dramatic World Series against the Yankees. But the Mets were hungry. They again advanced to the NLCS in 2000, winning in five games. A day later, the Yankees advanced to their fourth World Series in five years, setting up the first all-New York Fall Classic since Mickey Mantle's Yankees dispatched the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1956.

"You dropped off your dry cleaning or got some milk, and everybody was talking about it," said Yankees manager Joe Torre. "That ratcheted up the tension and the pressure. You could feel George Steinbrenner's breath on your back. It didn't matter who was the better team: the Yankees had to win."

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AL BELLO/GETTY IMAGES

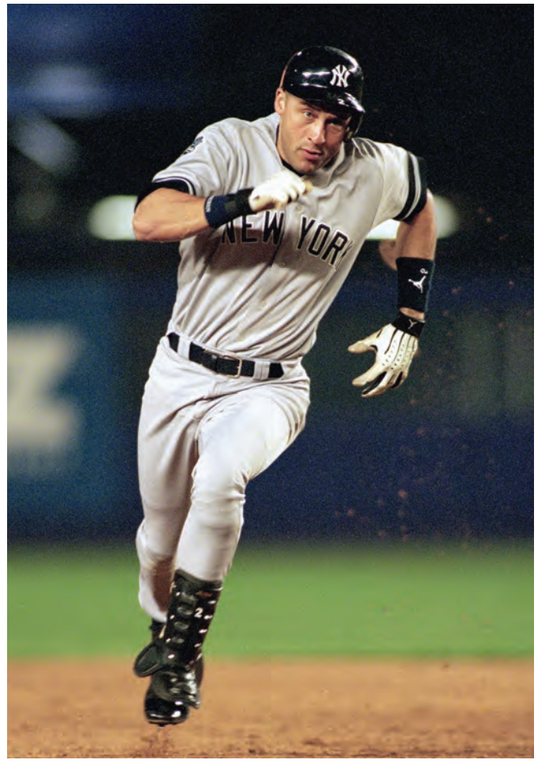
Featuring a cast of perennial All-Stars led by future Hall of Famers Derek Jeter and Mariano Rivera, the Yankees were indeed favored. But the Mets' cast of established contributors like Mike Piazza and Edgardo Alfonzo did not seem over-matched. Facing one of the most successful modern dynasties in professional sports, all they had to do was plant some doubt.

"If you looked at our dugout and what we had, and you looked at their dugout and what they had, we were the team that probably wasn't supposed to be there," said Mets outfielder Jay Payton. "But the guys in our dugout, we didn't feel that way. It was like, on paper, they had all the big names and the big guys. We felt like we were every bit as good as them."

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY

Although the Mets won seven more games than the Yankees during the 2000 regular season, MLB at that time alternated home-field advantage between the American and National Leagues. So it was that 55,913 attendees packed into Yankee Stadium for Game 1. Escorted by a phalanx of motorcycle cops, the Mets bused over the Triborough Bridge confident that their starter, Al Leiter, would match fellow left-hander Andy Pettitte.

Thousands wore caps featuring the Yankees' iconic deep navy blue, including New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani, who parked in a box seat close to the action. Plenty of orange and royal blue jerseys infiltrated the ballpark. Popular T-shirt designs at the time featured the logos of the B, D and 4 subway trains, which lead to Yankee Stadium, alongside the No. 7 train that services Shea.



JETER AND THE YANKS FELT THE PRESSURE FROM THE BOSS: "DON'T EMBARRASS ME."

"It was amazing," Mets outfielder Benny Agbayani said. "You had to be here to see what it was like. These fans really came out and supported us."

Despite the encouragement, things began inauspiciously for the Mets, when a potential two-run Todd Zeile homer turned into a sixth-inning double play. Thinking Zeile's ball had cleared the left-field wall, Timo Pérez jogged, surrendering valuable ground when Jeter fired home and created a play at the plate.

"There's not a time that I walk down the street that someone doesn't mention Timo Pérez," Zeile said.

Bubba Trammell and Alfonzo banged run-scoring hits in the seventh, turning a two-run Yankees lead into a one-run Mets margin. The Mets carried that advantage into the ninth, when Paul O'Neill engaged in a key at-bat against closer Armando Benitez, drawing a one-out walk. The crowd thundered as Benitez allowed a pair of singles and a game-tying Chuck Knoblauch sacrifice fly to force extra innings. In the 12th, José Vizcaino lined a single into left field that brought home the winning run.

The Mets felt the game had been theirs for the taking — a missed opportunity to mar the dynasty.

"The fact that there wasn't a Subway Series for 44 years, we said, 'Bring it on,'" Leiter said. "It was a great team, a great franchise. But boy, if we win Game 1, I think we win it all."

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After another tight Yankees win in Game 2, the Mets went on to win Game 3, but by that point, the Bronx Bombers believed they had the Series in hand — even if neither team kept its emotions firmly in check.

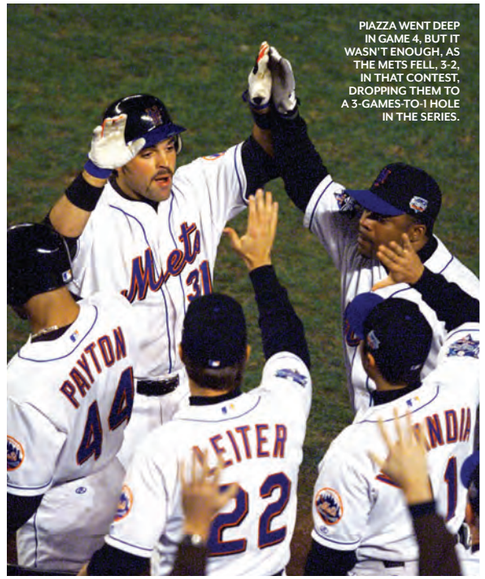
CLEMENS VS. PIAZZA

In baseball parlance, Mike Piazza "owned" Roger Clemens. On his way to establishing his place as the greatest-hitting catcher of his generation, the future Hall of Famer had risen to the challenge against the snarling Rocket, going 7-for-12 with three homers — including a grand slam in a June 9 blowout at Yankee Stadium.

When the teams met again on July 8, Clemens returned fire, drilling Piazza in the front of his batting helmet. Piazza crumpled to the infield dirt, having sustained a concussion. Clemens said that the pitch was supposed to be inside and belt high; Piazza replied that it was "definitely intentional." When Clemens phoned the Mets clubhouse, Piazza refused the call.

That anger was still smoldering in Game 2, when Piazza's bat shattered on an inside heater. The ball shot foul, and part of the bat spun toward the mound, where Clemens scooped it and whipped the jagged barrel in Piazza's direction. The benches cleared as Clemens claimed he "thought it was the ball," though that did not explain why he would throw it toward the on-deck circle. Clemens would be fined $50,000, a small price to pay after he thoroughly dominated the Mets over eight scoreless innings, striking out nine.

"Roger was like a Texas high school middle linebacker on Friday night," said the Yankees' David Cone. "He was just frothing at the mouth and over-amped. He was made out to be a villain. He's like, 'Here's your bat, get it out of here.' He surely didn't throw it at him, but he threw it in front of him to make a statement. It was sort of an 'in your face.'"



PIAZZA WENT DEEP IN GAME 4, BUT IT WASN'T ENOUGH, AS THE METS FELL, 3-2, IN THAT CONTEST, DROPPING THEM TO A 3-GAMES-TO-1 HOLE IN THE SERIES.

CHARLES KRUPA/AP (SIGN); JED JACOBSOHN/GETTY IMAGES

NEW YORK BELONGS TO THE BRONX

Even with three rings safely stashed, the Yankees felt as though they were the team with everything to lose. Their status as kings of the city was being challenged, a stance that principal owner George M. Steinbrenner made clear, rearranging furniture in Shea Stadium's outdated visiting clubhouse while muttering: "Don't embarrass me."

The Shea assemblage was still buzzing from the Mets' Game 3 victory when Jeter's name was announced over the public address system, Torre having promoted him to the leadoff spot. Jeter lashed at the first pitch from Bobby Jones, driving a fastball into the left-field bleachers. The Yankees had re-established control in a series in which each game was decided by one or two runs. Had fortune shifted in the other direction, Jeter said he couldn't have continued living in Manhattan: "In my mind, it was a battle for New York."

Jeter cleared the fences again in the sixth inning of Game 5, belting a game-tying homer as Leiter valiantly attempted to push the battle another evening. In one

of the last gasps of an era that eschewed pitch counts, Mets manager Bobby Valentine placed his trust in the fatiguing Leiter. Luis Sojo clipped Leiter's 142nd pitch, dribbling a grounder into center field for a single that brought home Jorge Posada and Scott Brosius with the Series' deciding runs.

"That was the best moment of my career," Sojo said. "When you play with Derek Jeter, Bernie Williams, Tino Martinez, all those guys — for me to come through in that particular moment was something very special for me and my family."

As they had two years prior in San Diego, the Yankees were set to spray bubbly and Budweiser in a National League ballpark. Concluding his fourth season as a full-time closer, Mariano Rivera had the honors of recording the final outs. Representing the potential tying run, Piazza lashed a drive that seemed as though it might leave the ballpark, perhaps missing the barrel of his bat by a fraction of an inch.

"If the Mets had won, it would have been huge for their franchise," Cone said. "George would have been upset. Who knows what would have happened, what changes would have been made?"

Alas, the Mets were out of magic. Piazza's missile died steps shy of the warning track in center field, dropping into the pocket of Williams' glove. It was the only moment of the Series that Torre truly enjoyed. His Yankees could finally relax; their three-peat was complete.

"We came out on top, but it was a tough series," Posada said. "I remember being exhausted; I remember being in bed for like two days, and then we had the parade. Like Derek said, if we would have lost, I think we probably would have had to move to Yonkers." ◆

> **It didn't matter who was the better team. The Yankees had to win.**
>
> TORRE

BRAD MANGIN/MLB PHOTOS

call her 'Coach'

Several female coaches are taking their rightful place on the field.

By Alyson Footer

ADAM GLANZMAN/MLB PHOTOS

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In baseball, history-making is usually left to the players on the field. But last winter, several clubs made trailblazing hires that signaled progress in segments of the game not known for inclusivity.

Teams hired women — as coaches.

Rachel Balkovec is a hitting coach in the New York Yankees' minor league system, the first woman to be hired in that role. Rachel Folden is the first female coach in Chicago Cubs history, after being named lead hitting-lab technician and a coach for their Rookie-level Arizona League team. Christina Whitlock is a coach for the St. Louis Cardinals, assigned to work with Minor Leaguers.

And Alyssa Nakken made the biggest splash of the winter when the San Francisco Giants announced in January that she would be an assistant coach on their Major League staff.

"It's something I definitely don't take lightly," said Nakken, who turned 30 in June. "This is a huge step for baseball and society, with all of these women getting hired into these positions that have traditionally been held by men."

Nakken made official on-field history in July when she coached first base during a Giants exhibition game with the A's. She and first base coach Antoan Richardson worked together during Summer Camp, and it was Richardson's suggestion that Nakken coach in his place for the final innings of that game.

"I was always preparing and staying ready for whatever position I'd be put in," Nakken said during a Zoom call with reporters a week after her debut. "We've talked about this opportunity before, but it kind of came quickly."

NAKKEN (LEFT)

Balkovec and Folden were hired by their respective teams the same day last fall; less than two months later, Nakken's hiring was made public. The Cardinals, who were the first to hire a female strength and conditioning coordinator when they appointed Balkovec to that position in 2014, further cemented their reputation as one of the more forward-thinking clubs when they named Whitlock as a coach in their Minor League system.

Consider this an upward trend.

"I think it's important that all organizations see there are big pools of people to choose from to fill big and important roles," Nakken said. "It doesn't make sense to me that for so long, we've cut off 50 percent of the population to fill roles like that. This step is big."

Women have been infused into the baseball workforce, albeit slowly, going back a couple of decades, when Kim Ng and Jean Afterman first held assistant general manager titles with two of the industry's most prestigious clubs. Ng, who currently serves as MLB's senior VP of baseball and softball development, was the Yankees' assistant GM from 1998 until 2001 before joining the Los Angeles Dodgers in a similar capacity.

Afterman replaced Ng in 2001, and has been with the Yankees ever since. In 2012, the Yankees added "senior vice president" to her assistant GM title.

But on the field, the presence of women has been scarce. For a while, the list of women in uniform consisted of two names. Justine Siegal, who nearly a decade ago threw batting practice to hitters with several teams during spring training, was hired by the Oakland A's in 2015 as a guest instructor for their instructional league team. Last year, Veronica Alvarez was hired by the A's to be a guest catching coach during Spring Training.

The women who have earned their recent titles understand how impactful their hirings have been for the industry. Especially with regard to younger females with future aspirations to work in baseball.

"It's just special to be part of progress," said Balkovec, a native of Omaha, Neb. "The word that comes to mind, especially now, is responsibility. I have a responsibility, and I also have a job to do, and to be respectful of it and be grateful for it, and to be mindful of it as I go through my day."

The journey wasn't easy. When Balkovec, 33, was starting out, she dealt with an abundance of rejection, despite an impressive resume. She has two master's degrees in human movement sciences. She played college softball at Creighton University and speaks fluent Spanish. In a time when baseball front offices constantly search for people with scientific minds who look at the game through a bio-mechanical lens, here was Balkovec, not only fascinated by that aspect of the game, but highly educated in it. And yet …

BALKOVEC

ALEX TRAUTWIG/MLB PHOTOS (NAKKEN); NEW YORK YANKEES

Following a Minor League strength and conditioning internship with the Cardinals in 2012, Balkovec was struggling to find any team to give her a chance.

In the offseason heading into 2013, she received a call from one organization that had an internship available with its rookie league team in Arizona. She interviewed with a male executive, in person, twice. He was impressed, told her he wanted to hire her, she said, and to hold tight while he got the administrative work done to complete the hire.

She followed up with phone calls and emails, and still, nothing. A couple of weeks later, he called to tell her that he couldn't hire her.

"The administration just didn't feel comfortable hiring a woman," she said he told her. He was profusely apologetic, telling her he thought her resume was great, that she interviewed well, and he wanted to bring her into the organization. Her gender, not her qualifications, was the problem.

"It sucks that I'm being discriminated against, but at least I know that I'm on the right track," Balkovec recalled thinking at that time.

The following offseason, she made a bold move that she hoped would curb the rejection. She changed her name to Rae and made all of her resume entries gender neutral, including identifying as a former Division I "athlete" rather than as a "softball player."

The responses were immediate. She set up a couple of interviews over email. She also received one call in particular that turned awkward quickly.

"I'm looking for Rae?" the male voice said.

"This is she," Balkovec answered.

After a few uncomfortable exchanges, he asked Balkovec if they could talk the next day.

She never heard from him again.

"I was desperate because I had been discriminated against, so I changed my name, and it worked," Balkovec said. "Ultimately, I changed it back quickly because I felt horrible. I had to trust that if they're not going to hire me because I'm a woman, I don't want to work for them."

NG

SIEGAL

MARCELO MARAGNI/MLB PHOTOS (NG); MARK DUNCAN/AP

There was one team that threw her a lifeline: the Cardinals, the team that gave her that first internship years earlier. They hired her as Minor League strength and conditioning coordinator, the first time an MLB team filled that role with a woman.

"I went from not even getting call-backs for an internship position to being a Minor League strength and conditioning coordinator, overseeing 250 athletes and strength coaches — all men," she said.

Today, with a bio-mechanics background, a specialization in eye-tracking and a wealth of knowledge of the cutting-edge technology that shapes player development, Balkovec is no longer an outlier. She's a commodity.

"What's cool about it is we're going to get to the point where it's not a conversation piece anymore," said Yankees senior VP and GM Brian Cashman, who approved the Balkovec hire on the recommendation of several player development staffers, including hitting coordinator Dillon Lawson. "It's just the norm. That's where writing the stories is important, because the sooner we get there, the better, where it's not a shock to the old-school system. It's recognition that women bring as much to the table as men and in many cases, more than men. We're late to the game probably, but better late than never."

Nakken had already been working for the Giants for five years when she got her big break.

She had different roles over the years, starting as an intern in 2014. She interviewed with 10 baseball operations staffers (all men), landed the internship and later helped with the Draft, international scouting and preparing for the trade deadline.

When Gabe Kapler was hired as the Giants' manager last offseason, the club overhauled its coaching operation. Nakken, acting as an ally and club employee who simply wanted to help, reached out to Kapler to ask how she could help him get acclimated. They spent considerable time together, talking things through.

What Nakken did not know at that time is that these conversations would eventually lead to a groundbreaking job offer.

"Assistant coach never came to mind," Nakken said. "I wanted to help this coaching staff and the new regime and help Gabe get acclimated and ready to take on this new role."

Nakken drew quite a bit of media attention when she first arrived at the Giants' Spring Training facility in Scottsdale, and she embraced it, understanding how much this means to young people — especially girls — aspiring to work in baseball.

"I still can't wrap my head around all of it," Nakken said. "But when I was growing up and trying to figure out what I wanted to do, I never saw this as an opportunity, being in baseball as an adult. You didn't see women in uniform, on the field, working with male athletes."

When baseball was on hiatus the first half of the regularly-scheduled season, Nakken said she used the time to continue watching video and studying opposing pitchers to analyze how they control the running game. She leaned on that knowledge as the first base coach, relaying signs to baserunners and providing them with each pitcher's time to the plate.

"We just see Alyssa as an especially effective coach, period," Kapler said. "At this point, she's so ingrained in our culture and so ingrained as a member of our coaching staff that she's just going around making players and staff members better. That's how I see it when I see her out on the field." ◆

Alyson Footer, a national correspondent, originally joined MLB.com as a reporter in 2001. A version of this article originally appeared in Baseball Digest.

MAX-ING OUT GLOBALLY

Highlighted by last year's London Series and European Tour, a handful of countries will be crucial to MLB's international strategy in the near future.

By Jon Paul Morosi

LENNART PREISS/MLB PHOTOS

IN ADDITION TO MAX KEPLER'S NATIVE GERMANY, HERE ARE FOUR COUNTRIES POISED TO GROW IN BASEBALL PARTICIPATION THROUGHOUT THE DECADE.

CHINA

Since MLB opened its Beijing office in 2008, the number of baseball players in China has increased more than sevenfold, from 1.2 to 8.5 million. There are 197 permanent baseball facilities across the country, up from 54 before MLB established its office. Chinese fans have been able to watch games through MLB's streaming relationship with Tencent, with 212 MLB games airing during the 2019 season alone. MLB operates Development Centers in Changzhou, Nanjing and Wuxi; the academies have produced 103 graduates, including 60 who have played college baseball in the U.S. or Asia and seven who signed with MLB organizations.

MEXICO

Six MLB teams traveled to play in Monterrey, Mexico, in 2019, with four doing so during the regular season. MLB officials hope to play a series at Mexico City's new Alfredo Harp Helú Stadium during the next several years, as they had planned to do in April 2020 until the COVID-19 pandemic forced the event's cancellation. In March 2019, MLB also announced a two-year player transfer agreement with the Liga Mexicana de Beisbol (LMB), creating greater opportunity and transparency for Mexican players seeking MLB careers. More than five million people have participated in MLB events in Mexico since MLB opened its Mexico City office in 2016, and television ratings for MLB broadcasts in Mexico have increased 75 percent over that time.

MAX

Kepler's notoriety in baseball began with a singular backstory. He was born in Berlin to a Polish father and American mother who met as ballet dancers. Kepler's extraordinary athleticism (no surprise, right?) afforded him the opportunity to turn professional in soccer or tennis. Instead, he agreed to a $775,000 signing bonus with the Minnesota Twins — a record for any German baseball player.

Last year, Kepler's narrative changed: He became a certifiable star, regardless of passport.

While Kepler remains one of the most interesting figures in the baseball world — he speaks English, German and Polish — on-field brilliance became his most evident trait. Kepler slugged 36 home runs in 2019, second only to Nelson Cruz on a 101-win Twins team. Christian Yelich, Cody Bellinger, Mookie Betts, George Springer and Bryce Harper were the only Major League right fielders who ranked ahead of him in Wins Above Replacement, according to FanGraphs.com.

By the end of last season, Kepler had a long-term contract and secure role on a division champion. He was about to turn 27. The time had arrived for Kepler to embrace the role many had envisioned for him: Major League Baseball ambassador to Europe.

"Virtually everywhere around the globe where baseball is popular, there is a hometown hero playing in MLB," said Jim Small, MLB senior vice president for international business and media. "Max is our hero in Germany — in Europe. His success will help us get more kids playing the game and get more games on German television in the years ahead."

Last November, Kepler embarked on a European tour organized by MLB. The trip began in London before a swing through four German cities: Munich, Regensburg, Berlin and Frankfurt. He taught a hitting class at the Regensburg baseball academy and boarding school he attended as a teenager. In Berlin, he offered a baseball tutorial to students at his alma mater, the John F. Kennedy School, and even reunited with his kindergarten teacher.

Through the journey, it became clear that Germany's fascination with baseball has grown to the point that an MLB Berlin Series — similar to the 2019 MLB London Series — could become a reality in the future. The greater question was whether the clinics and autograph signings were more meaningful for Kepler or the German kids he met.

"It was incredible," Kepler said. "I wasn't expecting the fans to come out as they did. Even the [kids] who never got to experience baseball before were eager to learn about the game.

"To be somewhat of an ambassador in Europe for a game that is somewhat a minority in the country, I am definitely very honored."

The most meaningful moments of all, Kepler said, came when he heard young people talk about staying up late — or perhaps getting up early — to watch him play on the other side of the world.

"More than a handful of kids, who I'd never met in my life, came up to me and told me they watch as many games as they can," Kepler said. "They stay up late and break the rules in their households, just to soak up more of the games."

When he was a kid, Kepler was an aspiring goalkeeper at the youth academy of Hertha BSC, the most prominent soccer club in the German capital. He also attended Steffi Graf's tennis academy on a scholarship. But baseball fascinated him during every summer vacation to see his mother's family in the U.S.

Wherever they visited relatives, Marek Rozycki and Kathy Kepler tried to find a baseball camp for their son.

"My parents were behind me, supporting me with every step I took," he said. "Most people that grow up in a country, they want to get out of the country they grew up in and go embark on a new journey, start a new page. The U.S. for me was the right way to go."

QUINN HARRIS/MLB PHOTOS (KEPLER); ROBERTO MAYA/MLB PHOTOS

Kepler is the second German-developed player to reach the Major Leagues. Donald Lutz, who was born in Watertown, N.Y., and grew up in Germany, became the first with the Cincinnati Reds in 2013.

"It's tremendous for German baseball that Max came back, so the kids see what they can do if they train hard," said Philipp Würfel, head of league operations and public relations for the German baseball and softball federation.

"Baseball in Europe and Germany is still a niche sport, so with Max having success, hitting lots of home runs, and getting traction in the main media, it helps to promote the sport."

Baseball is most popular in German cities that are near current or former American military bases and have successful clubs in the 16-team Bundesliga, Germany's top baseball league. Germany's youth national teams have become increasingly competitive in Europe, having won the U-15 European championship and claimed silver in the U-23 division last year.

Commercial success is the next frontier, although it's not fair — yet — to expect that Kepler will become as famous in Germany as Dirk Nowitzki. Germans developed a familiarity with basketball through the global popularity of Michael Jordan and Magic Johnson during the 1980s, long before Nowitzki made the first of his 14 All-Star appearances in 2002.

Basketball has been a school-based sport in Germany for many years, and MLB has plans to bring baseball into German schools in the future, as well. Heiko Oldoerp, a Boston-based German sports journalist, said he would advocate two crucial steps for MLB's growth in Germany: a greater number of MLB games on German television and ultimately a regular-season series staged in the country.

Berlin's Olympiastadion — with a similar layout to London Stadium, the site of last year's historic Yankees-Red Sox match-up — is perhaps the most compelling possible location. Berlin is Kepler's hometown, and the Hertha BSC training ground where he once worked on his goalkeeping is nearby.

"It would be another milestone," Kepler said about the possibility of playing in Berlin. "It would be amazing — a dream come true."

For now, the German baseball federation will work to develop the next Max Kepler at its academies in Regensburg and Paderborn — while Kepler continues to produce for the Twins' Bomba Squad.

Kepler said some of his favorite moments from the homecoming involved meeting German tennis star Alexander Zverev and soccer legend Oliver Bierhoff. With every home run Kepler hits, more kids across Germany will hold him in similarly high esteem — especially when they meet at the next baseball clinic.

"I definitely want to do it again, sit down with the kids, hear what they want to learn about the game," Kepler said, "and really push the game to the next level in Germany." ◆

Jon Paul Morosi is a reporter for MLB.com and MLB Network.

ALEX TRAUTWIG/MLB PHOTOS (LONDON SERIES); LENNART PREISS/MLB PHOTOS

INDIA

In popular culture, India's most widely known connection to baseball is through *Million Dollar Arm*, the 2014 film based on the true story of Rinku Singh and Dinesh Patel signing Minor League contracts with the Pirates after competing on a reality television show. While Singh and Patel didn't reach the Majors, MLB's efforts to grow the sport in India continue through an office the league opened in Delhi last year. MLB hopes to seize upon the similarities between cricket and baseball to drive fan interest and youth participation, beginning with the school-based program First Pitch. MLB will relaunch the "Million Dollar Arm" tryout in 2021 for Indian prospects hoping to land a contract, in collaboration with agent J.B. Bernstein, who was portrayed in the film by actor Jon Hamm. MLB will begin broadcasting games on Star Sports, India's top sports broadcaster, during the 2020 postseason.

UNITED KINGDOM

The interest for baseball in the U.K. — and Europe more broadly — was evident in 2019, when the Red Sox and Yankees played in the inaugural MLB London Series at sold-out London Stadium. MLB focused on youth engagement with a number of initiatives around the event, including the expansion of Fun At Bat (an introductory baseball/softball program) to U.K. schools and establishment of PLAY BALL PARK near London Stadium during the series. MLB opened Home Run House in a popular London shopping mall as the hub for British baseball fans, including virtual reality stations and batting cages. The British national baseball team has competed in past World Baseball Classic Qualifiers and has realistic aspirations of reaching the next Classic.

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WS YEAR BY YEAR

1903
Boston Americans (AL) 5
Pittsburgh Pirates (NL) 3

1905
New York Giants (NL) 4
Philadelphia Athletics (AL) 1

1906
Chicago White Sox (AL) 4
Chicago Cubs (NL) 2

1907
Chicago Cubs (NL) 4
Detroit Tigers (AL) 0

1908
Chicago Cubs (NL) 4
Detroit Tigers (AL) 1

1909
Pittsburgh Pirates (NL) 4
Detroit Tigers (AL) 3

1910
Philadelphia Athletics (AL) 4
Chicago Cubs (NL) 1

1911
Philadelphia Athletics (AL) 4
New York Giants (NL) 2

1912
Boston Red Sox (AL) 4
New York Giants (NL) 3

1913
Philadelphia Athletics (AL) 4
New York Giants (NL) 1

1914
Boston Braves (NL) 4
Philadelphia Athletics (AL) 0

1915
Boston Red Sox (AL) 4
Philadelphia Phillies (NL) 1

1916
Boston Red Sox (AL) 4
Brooklyn Robins (NL) 1

1917
Chicago White Sox (AL) 4
New York Giants (NL) 2

1918
Boston Red Sox (AL) 4
Chicago Cubs (NL) 2

1919
Cincinnati Reds (NL) 5
Chicago White Sox (AL) 3

1920
Cleveland Indians (AL) 5
Brooklyn Robins (NL) 2

1921
New York Giants (NL) 5
New York Yankees (AL) 3

1922
New York Giants (NL) 4
New York Yankees (AL) 0

1923
New York Yankees (AL) 4
New York Giants (NL) 2

1924
Washington Senators (AL) 4
New York Giants (NL) 3

1925
Pittsburgh Pirates (NL) 4
Washington Senators (AL) 3

1926
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 4
New York Yankees (AL) 3

1927
New York Yankees (AL) 4
Pittsburgh Pirates (NL) 0

1928
New York Yankees (AL) 4
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 0

1929
Philadelphia Athletics (AL) 4
Chicago Cubs (NL) 1

1930
Philadelphia Athletics (AL) 4
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 2

1931
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 4
Philadelphia Athletics (AL) 3

1932
New York Yankees (AL) 4
Chicago Cubs (NL) 0

1933
New York Giants (NL) 4
Washington Senators (AL) 1

1934
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 4
Detroit Tigers (AL) 3

1935
Detroit Tigers (AL) 4
Chicago Cubs (NL) 2

1936
New York Yankees (AL) 4
New York Giants (NL) 2

1937
New York Yankees (AL) 4
New York Giants (NL) 1

1938
New York Yankees (AL) 4
Chicago Cubs (NL) 0

1939
New York Yankees (AL) 4
Cincinnati Reds (NL) 0

1940
Cincinnati Reds (NL) 4
Detroit Tigers (AL) 3

1941
New York Yankees (AL) 4
Brooklyn Dodgers (NL) 1

1942
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 4
New York Yankees (AL) 1

1943
New York Yankees (AL) 4
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 1

1944
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 4
St. Louis Browns (AL) 2

1945
Detroit Tigers (AL) 4
Chicago Cubs (NL) 3

1946
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 4
Boston Red Sox (AL) 3

1947
New York Yankees (AL) 4
Brooklyn Dodgers (NL) 3

1948
Cleveland Indians (AL) 4
Boston Braves (NL) 2

1949
New York Yankees (AL) 4
Brooklyn Dodgers (NL) 1

1950
New York Yankees (AL) 4
Philadelphia Phillies (NL) 0

1951
New York Yankees (AL) 4
New York Giants (NL) 2

1952
New York Yankees (AL) 4
Brooklyn Dodgers (NL) 3

1953
New York Yankees (AL) 4
Brooklyn Dodgers (NL) 2

1954
New York Giants (NL) 4
Cleveland Indians (AL) 0

2019 NATIONALS

ALEX TRAUTWIG/MLB PHOTOS

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WS YEAR BY YEAR

1955
Brooklyn Dodgers (NL) 4
New York Yankees (AL) 3

1956
New York Yankees (AL) 4
Brooklyn Dodgers (NL) 3

1957
Milwaukee Braves (NL) 4
New York Yankees (AL) 3

1958
New York Yankees (AL) 4
Milwaukee Braves (NL) 3

1959
Los Angeles Dodgers (NL) 4
Chicago White Sox (AL) 2

1960
Pittsburgh Pirates (NL) 4
New York Yankees (AL) 3

1961
New York Yankees (AL) 4
Cincinnati Reds (NL) 1

1962
New York Yankees (AL) 4
San Francisco Giants (NL) 3

1963
Los Angeles Dodgers (NL) 4
New York Yankees (AL) 0

1964
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 4
New York Yankees (AL) 3

1965
Los Angeles Dodgers (NL) 4
Minnesota Twins (AL) 3

1966
Baltimore Orioles (AL) 4
Los Angeles Dodgers (NL) 0

1967
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 4
Boston Red Sox (AL) 3

1968
Detroit Tigers (AL) 4
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 3

1969
New York Mets (NL) 4
Baltimore Orioles (AL) 1

1970
Baltimore Orioles (AL) 4
Cincinnati Reds (NL) 1

1971
Pittsburgh Pirates (NL) 4
Baltimore Orioles (AL) 3

1972
Oakland Athletics (AL) 4
Cincinnati Reds (NL) 3

1973
Oakland Athletics (AL) 4
New York Mets (NL) 3

1974
Oakland Athletics (AL) 4
Los Angeles Dodgers (NL) 1

1975
Cincinnati Reds (NL) 4
Boston Red Sox (AL) 3

1976
Cincinnati Reds (NL) 4
New York Yankees (AL) 0

1977
New York Yankees (AL) 4
Los Angeles Dodgers (NL) 2

1978
New York Yankees (AL) 4
Los Angeles Dodgers (NL) 2

1979
Pittsburgh Pirates (NL) 4
Baltimore Orioles (AL) 3

1980
Philadelphia Phillies (NL) 4
Kansas City Royals (AL) 2

1981
Los Angeles Dodgers (NL) 4
New York Yankees (AL) 2

1982
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 4
Milwaukee Brewers (AL) 3

1983
Baltimore Orioles (AL) 4
Philadelphia Phillies (NL) 1

1984
Detroit Tigers (AL) 4
San Diego Padres (NL) 1

1985
Kansas City Royals (AL) 4
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 3

1986
New York Mets (NL) 4
Boston Red Sox (AL) 3

1987
Minnesota Twins (AL) 4
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 3

1988
Los Angeles Dodgers (NL) 4
Oakland Athletics (AL) 1

1989
Oakland Athletics (AL) 4
San Francisco Giants (NL) 0

1990
Cincinnati Reds (NL) 4
Oakland Athletics (AL) 0

1991
Minnesota Twins (AL) 4
Atlanta Braves (NL) 3

1992
Toronto Blue Jays (AL) 4
Atlanta Braves (NL) 2

1993
Toronto Blue Jays (AL) 4
Philadelphia Phillies (NL) 2

1995
Atlanta Braves (NL) 4
Cleveland Indians (AL) 2

1996
New York Yankees (AL) 4
Atlanta Braves (NL) 2

1997
Florida Marlins (NL) 4
Cleveland Indians (AL) 3

1998
New York Yankees (AL) 4
San Diego Padres (NL) 0

1999
New York Yankees (AL) 4
Atlanta Braves (NL) 0

2000
New York Yankees (AL) 4
New York Mets (NL) 1

2001
Arizona Diamondbacks (NL) 4
New York Yankees (AL) 3

2002
Anaheim Angels (AL) 4
San Francisco Giants (NL) 3

2003
Florida Marlins (NL) 4
New York Yankees (AL) 2

2004
Boston Red Sox (AL) 4
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 0

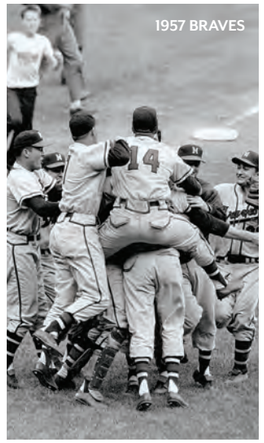
2005
Chicago White Sox (AL) 4
Houston Astros (NL) 0

2006
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 4
Detroit Tigers (AL) 1

2007
Boston Red Sox (AL) 4
Colorado Rockies (NL) 0

2008
Philadelphia Phillies (NL) 4
Tampa Bay Rays (AL) 1

2009
New York Yankees (AL) 4
Philadelphia Phillies (NL) 2


1957 BRAVES

2010
San Francisco Giants (NL) 4
Texas Rangers (AL) 1

2011
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 4
Texas Rangers (AL) 3

2012
San Francisco Giants (NL) 4
Detroit Tigers (AL) 0

2013
Boston Red Sox (AL) 4
St. Louis Cardinals (NL) 2

2014
San Francisco Giants (NL) 4
Kansas City Royals (AL) 3

2015
Kansas City Royals (AL) 4
New York Mets (NL) 1

2016
Chicago Cubs (NL) 4
Cleveland Indians (AL) 3

2017
Houston Astros (AL) 4
Los Angeles Dodgers (NL) 3

2018
Boston Red Sox (AL) 4
Los Angeles Dodgers (NL) 1

2019
Washington Nationals (NL) 4
Houston Astros (AL) 3

AP PHOTO

We Made It!

After such a tumultuous year in sports and in the world, it's nothing short of amazing that we reached the World Series.

By Will Leitch

I THINK IT IS OKAY TO admit it now: I wasn't sure we were going to get here.

Now that we are here, it's worth looking back to where we were in March. Just as Spring Training was winding down, with teams rounding out their rosters for Opening Day, the virus that had lurked in the background of our lives suddenly catapulted itself to the forefront: It became all that mattered, for everyone. (And in many ways it remains so.) Baseball shut down, along with everything else, and you couldn't help but wonder: Was this it? How do you put together a season in a pandemic? I tried to make my peace with it. It's a global catastrophe. We've lost so much. Maybe a year of baseball had to be lost as well.

And yet: Forward we forged. Progress was made. There were setbacks, substantial ones, legitimately perilous ones. But then, somehow, this season, this wild, surreal season, with its truncated schedule, its new rules, its new playoff format, its stoppages and restarts, its lack of fans in the stands, the very lifeblood of what baseball is and has been for more than a century … it somehow happened. Not just that: It was amazing. We saw things we were expecting, the overall brilliance of Mike Trout, the genius of Clayton Kershaw, the warm smile and otherworldly talent of Mookie Betts, the pulsating talent of Ronald Acuna and Juan Soto. But we also saw incredible talents emerge, to grab us by the lapels and announce their presence to the world, from Mike Yastrzemski to Luis Robert to Fernando Tatis Jr., who might just be the most purely thrilling baseball player to watch in recent memory. And we saw teams that had been absent from our postseason for years finally have their moment on the national stage. It was 60 games. It was not standard. It was unlike anything we've seen before.

It was fantastic. It may have been different than how we've experienced it before. But it was very much still baseball. It was an absolute blast.

Now here we are. Doggone it if they didn't pull this whole thing off. Not only did the season finish amidst a public health crisis, MLB is going to cap it off with a World Series. This is not 1904, or 1994, where we have a gap in history when a season didn't finish. The Series is here. It's happening right now. Sure, it's a World Series unlike any other, in a year unlike any other. But we made it all the way here.

During times of strife and stress and pain, one looks for comfort, or a balm. Baseball has been that balm this year. It has not fixed everything: Nothing could. But in a year that has been anything but familiar, it has provided, for three hours every night for two months, some familiar respite. It has been there for us before; of course it would be there for us now. I cannot wait to see who wins this World Series. But mostly: I'm just grateful that I get to see it at all. I feel lucky. I suspect we all do. ◆

Will Leitch is a national correspondent for MLB.com.

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